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# BRITISH WOMEN IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

BY

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"LITERARY LONDON," ETC.

WITH FIFTY-SEVEN ILLUSTRATIONS



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To  
MY DAUGHTER

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## INTRODUCTION

It is not the aim of this book to try and cover the whole field of British woman's achievement, nor to name all those who have taken part in it; that would be an impossible task. Its object is to show the wonderful change in the position of women that has been brought about by the individual efforts of a few determined pioneers. The extraordinary impetus with which the fair sex, once convinced of the possibilities within their reach, have moved forward, bursting their bonds and fetters, and opening doors that seemed inexorably closed, reminds one of Mr. Stacy Aumonier's amusing story of the man who stayed in bed, generating such an enormous fund of energy that when circumstances compelled him to arise he performed stupendous feats. For centuries women have remained passively in the background, watching the antics of men on the stage of the world, ready to comfort, flatter and sustain, but not allowed out in the limelight. In untold millions of homes the symbolical comedy has been enacted, of the husband standing on steps to put up the pictures, while the wife remains below, holding the hammer and nails.

An admirable example of this quiet work in the background is to be found in Miss Faithfull's description of her mother in her book, "In the House of my Pilgrimage": "My mother's activity knew no bounds; there were eight of us to bring up. . . . She made our clothes, taught us, kept elaborate accounts, wrote a

diary, contributed articles on the ethics of daily life to the magazines, and began to write a history of England. Carpenter's 'Mental Physiology' and Buckle's 'History of Civilization' remain in my memory among the books with which she grappled. Nowadays women have much intellectual companionship, endless opportunities for discussion and much stimulus to mental life. She had none."

In this typical way feminine forces quietly gathered in the background, and when at length they found an outlet women with irresistible vigour carried all before them. Lady Astor, our first woman M.P., sat alone among men in the House of Commons for six years; an ordeal that might have daunted the bravest. Can we imagine a man in similar circumstances? He would have turned tail and fled. She gloried in her position, well aware it had been won for her by one of the hardest fights in history, lasting over fifty years, and she has justified the faith reposed in her. She has not talked a great deal; one newspaper computed her output at about a tenth of that of some of the men, but she has had her say in every scheme for the betterment of conditions, and her comments are always terse and to the point and often witty. In a crisis she does not mince her words. Describing her experiences at a public meeting she said when she first spoke about things women wanted in the House of Commons it was like a voice crying in the wilderness—and the wilderness answered back. One prominent man she knew, and who did not speak to her in the House for nearly two years, eventually congratulated her on "sticking" it; he had thought the policy of isolation would be too strong for her. Then there is Lady Rhondda, the perfect type of business woman, with her extraordinary grip of affairs; of how many important companies is



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she not chairman or director? What has been the result of her example? Not long ago she stated that there are now three hundred women directors of large and influential businesses. She was one of the two English feminists chosen by the International Committee of Women to present to the plenipotentiaries gathered in Paris for the Anti-War Pact, the Equal Rights Treaty, the first article of which is :

“ The contracting States agree that upon the ratification of this treaty men and women shall have equal rights throughout the territory subject to their respective jurisdictions.”

There was Mrs. Pankhurst, who at the end of a long life, mainly spent in fighting for the Vote for Women, came forward as a candidate for Whitechapel in the Conservative interest. I heard her speak at a crowded meeting not long before her much lamented death, and her eloquent flow of ideas took the colour, as usual, out of the speeches of all the men. Grit and humour, the two qualities that carry everything before them, are characteristic of the best type of British woman.

When the idea of this book was first suggested I took up a daily paper and straightway found three typical instances of this British quality of grit : the first was a little twelve-year-old girl, born without fingers or thumbs, who works at her embroidery with the skill of a normal child and can do almost everything for herself. Her head mistress made the significant comment : “ Given courage and faith the crippled and physically defective can do wonderfully well.” The second was a woman, the only one among 687 competitors, who gained the first prize at a parade of van horses in Regent's Park : and the third, a woman

who had appeared for the first time at Smithfield Market as a meat carrier; a little fair-haired woman who meant to carry on the work of her late husband and dispose in a few hours of tons of meat. "I couldn't bear to see my husband's old men out of work. I am certain I shall succeed. I don't feel at all strange being the only woman in the market. I just think I am here to get on with the job."

We are very far away from the Victorian ideals of gentility; there is nothing derogatory now in soiling the fingers; a woman can follow any avocation without loss of prestige; our Queen herself has sold at a bazaar and enjoyed the experience. No woman in the kingdom discharges her multifarious and often very boring duties more faithfully than Queen Mary, and her example has helped to break down many prejudices. Her own entire lack of prejudice may be seen in the fact that she not only allowed an ex-factory girl to write a book about her, but gave her every facility. We seldom hear scoffs now at our "effete aristocracy," and the woman "lapped in luxury from her birth." "Flying is an ideal way of spending a holiday" is the verdict of a duchess of sixty-two after flying 3,500 miles in eight days and passing fifty feet above the active crater of Mount Vesuvius, and over the forest fires which at the time were ravaging the Riviera. This duchess says she finds flying the most exhilarating of all sports, and when in the air is so completely possessed by the thrill that she never thinks of any possible danger. What a change from the Victorian woman who assumed a cap and was regarded as shelved before she reached the forties. Age nowadays is no barrier to action, and the elderly can, and often do, have as exciting a time as the young. Miss Benham, aged sixty, has spent the last twenty years walking by herself all over the world,

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and has no intention of leaving off; she has walked across Africa, through Syria, Palestine, Tibet, over the Himalayas, in Singapore, China and New Zealand. She goes unarmed, has no fear of wild beasts and is never lonely. Miss Gordon is another traveller; during the last six years she has covered about 25,000 miles, going round the world, painting pictures and selling them as she goes. Far more wonderful was Miss Gertrude Bell, the only woman Political Officer, who died two or three years ago at the age of fifty-seven, having worn herself out with the responsibilities attached to maintaining the prestige of Great Britain in the establishment of an Arab Government at Iraq. From her earliest years she was passionately devoted to travel, and had a genius for languages, Arabic in particular. She acted as Oriental Secretary to two High Commissioners, Sir Percy Cox and Sir Henry Dobbs. When the Kurdish chiefs came to pay their respects to Sir Percy they always sought her out. King Faisal used to invite her to tea and discuss questions of the frontier and the flag. She wrote home: "He trusts us and believes that one or two of us would go to the stake for him." The Arabs called her "Light of our Eyes," and on the occasion of her return after a break-down in health they came in continuous streams and overwhelmed her with every demonstration of delight and affection.

We have older ladies, still going strong, with long and honourable records; many of them Dames of the British Empire. Dame Madge Kendall, aged eighty, is getting up a fund for a new hospital; Dame Henrietta Barnett, seventy-seven, is one of the few people in the world whose daydream has materialized; a daydream of a lovely suburb, set with gardens, where class barriers do not exist and all unite in a common brother-

hood. She is the President of a federation of 437 settlements in the United States of America, founded on the model of Toynbee Hall, and many of which she visited three years ago during a six weeks' tour. She broadcasts talks, writes books, articles and pamphlets, takes the chair at numerous meetings and found time last year as usual to send in four pictures to the Royal Academy. Dame Millicent Fawcett, the veteran agitator, is still supporting various causes, unveiling memorials and so forth; and there are many others.

Men need not fear the competition of women; the true woman does not want to compete but to co-operate. Whatever a woman's aims, pursuits or calling may be, when she finds her mate he becomes the chief factor in her life; and she has no joy greater than her realization that her baby depends entirely on her. The pride of young parents in their first-born is only equalled by the pride of a small boy in his daddy. Whatever the unsuccessful may say, men and women are certainly intended for family life. Dr. Johnson was of opinion that "To be happy at home is the ultimate result of all ambition, the end to which every enterprise and labour tends, and of which every desire prompts the prosecution." But as Professor Westermarck says: "The feeling which makes husband and wife true companions for better or worse can grow up only in societies where the altruistic sentiments of man are strong enough to make him recognize woman as his equal." The ideal marriage is based on community of interests, and this indisputable tendency of modern life should give us great hope for the future. Now that man is beginning to look upon woman as a companion, he frequently selects for his wife a girl engaged in the same profession or pursuit; many instances could be



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cited, among doctors, barristers, aviators, members of Parliament, in fact in almost every calling; the common interest constitutes a great bond between them, woman has the opportunity to be a true helpmate. Passion, however strong, is not enduring, but the love based on a community of interests deepens and strengthens with the years. I think most women would be content if, at the end of their married lives, their husbands could say of them as a firebrick manufacturer recently said of his wife, in his will: "I wish most thankfully to acknowledge and express my deep gratitude to my dear wife for the full measure of happiness I have enjoyed during our married life, for the constant love she has ever borne me and for the wisdom of her counsel which has been of inestimable benefit to me, and particularly for the great affection with which I have been surrounded in my family life as the result of her loving care and unfailing good temper."

The fact that a woman has a profession or calling does not cut her off from matrimony; the qualities that make her a success in her calling are often those that make her attractive as a wife. Three out of the four pioneers in the legal profession married before they had attained their ambition, but resumed their work directly the profession was open to them. Professor Winifred Cullis asserted at a meeting of head mistresses that she knew intimately a number of households where women carried on professional work outside their homes, and in the large majority of such cases the homes were homes in the best sense of the word, with happy personal relations between parents and children. A clever woman, as we all know, is an inspiration to her children, and the mothers of great men are usually remarkable. Agatha Butler is a case in point; she was a senior

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classic in 1887, beating all the men; her three sons are exceptionally brilliant. Brains no longer frighten away the male; he has learned their value; he knows that beauty seldom lasts but brains may endure to the end. To mate is Nature's invincible law, and when the sexes are equal in numbers again, as they were in the past and as they may be in the future when women have helped to put down war, to abolish dangerous occupations, and learned to rear their delicate boy babies, every woman may expect to have a husband and a home. It is a fact that boys are born in larger numbers than girls; e.g., in 1926 1,041 boys were born and 1,000 girls, and in 1927 the proportion was greater. Meantime, however, there are 2,000,000 more women than men in this country, and it is quite evident that those without incomes must work.

But apart from the single women with insufficient means many married couples have to face the fact that because of the husband's inability it may devolve upon the wife to support the family. There is also the unfortunate case of a sister or sisters keeping house for a brother whose marriage turns them adrift. One of the tragedies of the Victorian age was the middle-aged woman suddenly called upon to earn her own living. "Miss Matty" in "Cranford" was a typical example; when the bank containing the greater part of her modest fortune collapsed, and she reviewed her accomplishments, hoping to make use of one of them for a livelihood, she found all she could do was to make "spills." From every point of view it is just and fair, and indeed mere common sense that every woman who does not possess an independent income should be afforded the opportunity of learning some profession or trade by which she can support herself if necessary. To the argument that it is waste of time

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to train a woman for a calling which she does not pursue there is the convincing reply that not only is her mind widened by the knowledge gained, but her presence and fees are of use to the institution in which she trains—such establishments flourish in proportion to the number of their students, and the larger the number the more professors can be employed. If a percentage of the students do not pursue their work as a career there will be less competition for those who continue.

It is contended that the majority of women marry, and the thought that his charming young daughter is sure to get married often causes a father to hesitate to spend his hard-earned money in equipping her for a career, but who can tell what the future may have in store; he will not have done his best for her unless he has fitted her for an honourable calling. Even the most attractive women do not always marry, and it is unfair to a girl to put marriage before her as the only alternative; the husband hunting it entails is enough to frighten away all the eligible males. I asked a young friend once, when I had a girl of this obvious type staying with me, why he had ceased his visits; he instantly replied: "She will marry me if she gets half a chance." This girl's chances of marriage would have been greater if her acquisitive instincts had been appeased in earning her living. After all, a man does like to have some say in his choice of a wife.

People are fond of saying "girls are so different now from what they used to be"; but are they? Their dominating trait, just as it was in the Victorian age, is the desire to shine—to earn the admiration and respect of their contemporaries. It is this, unfortunately, that sometimes drives them into a marriage in which their heart is not concerned and with which even their

reason cannot concur. Their friends are all getting married and they do not want to be left on the shelf. Is it not far better that their thoughts should be turned to a career than that they should make an unhappy marriage?

There is really no need to be awed by the brainy modern girl, she is but human. A brilliant third year girl at one of our Oxford colleges for whom a First is anticipated, used her gown to draw up her fire and then flung it into her cupboard. After ten minutes' enjoyment of the blaze she went to her work in the library. Twenty minutes later another student passing the door noticed smoke issuing from under it, and going in found the room full of smoke and flames issuing from the cupboard; she gave the alarm, four policemen hurried up blowing their whistles, and a fire engine dashed across Magdalen Bridge while it seemed as if the entire population of Oxford gathered round the college. The fire was extinguished at the cost of the carpet, ceiling, the cupboard containing the entire wardrobe of the unfortunate student, and other minor casualties, while the smell occasioned by the catastrophe rose to high heaven for the space of several days.

There is an instinct in girls which parents would do well to recognize; it is their inability to do so which is one of the chief causes of their conflict with the younger generation, viz., the spirit of adventure. That girls do possess an adventurous spirit must be clear to anyone who read the Home Secretary's statement that in the last six months of 1927, 1,117 girls under twenty years of age were reported "Missing," and in the same period in 1926, 1,077; it seems obvious that about 2,000 girls a year or more go off to seek their fortunes; they are usually traced or return. Miss Edith Beesley, the first woman to become branch manager of an insurance



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company, at an income of £1,000 a year, said in an article in the *Chronicle* that entry into the business world is enormously exciting to a young girl and it gives an outlet to her adventurous spirit. Arnold Bennett was one of the first to recognize the thrills that an office life provides for a girl in his novel "Hilda Lessways"; and an American novelist once wrote of her heroine: "Mary would have risen from the dead to talk about the office." There can be no question that girls are far happier out in the world pursuing some congenial calling than sitting at home waiting for a husband.

It is, however, the risk of marriage that prevents women from being placed on an equal footing with men in the labour market. Marriage affects woman for the time being in a totally different way from man. In his case his new responsibilities make him a more reliable and steady worker, but a woman as a rule drops her work, even though she may have become valuable in her office, preferring to devote herself to her husband and home. An insurance broker had a clever confidential clerk who was keen on her work and earning £400 a year. He had advanced her over the heads of other girls. When she gave in her resignation because she was going to be married it was like a bolt from the blue. There was a certain M.P., a keen social worker who, marrying again, gave up all her work. These are typical examples, and the majority of women marry; in Government offices where a number of girls are employed, ten per cent. leave to get married every year. In the teaching profession the average working life of a woman has been estimated at three years. Mr. Harold Cox recently quoted statistics showing that after fifty only one-sixth of the feminine population remain unmarried. This risk of matrimony is frequently advanced as an excuse for withholding from women the

opportunities of training for senior work that are given to men, and there have been various controversies in the Press as to whether it is possible for a woman to combine motherhood and a career. Several well-known women have expressed a passionate belief that it is impossible. But is it? A mother should certainly devote herself to her little children; no hireling can impress on the developing mind of a child the wise and tender lessons that the loving mother can impart, nor care for the little bodies with such comprehension, but when the children are in bed and asleep—in their early days they spend much time in sleep—and when they grow old enough to go to school—and how much better the modern school is than any tuition at home can be—what then? In these days of limited families and labour saving devices a woman is often freed from her domestic cares at a comparatively early age; on every hand she is saved exertion; if her cook fails the big stores can furnish her with any kind of food ready prepared; she can buy any garment for herself or her family at a price suited to her purse, and when she goes for a holiday she need only choose the place and find the money, there are a number of societies whose agents will relieve her of all trouble. Even the most domesticated woman finds herself with a good deal of leisure once the nursery years are passed, and if she has the requisite intellect and energy why should she not pursue the calling she loves and in which she can be of service to the community? It is universally admitted that women have brought into business, the professions and public life a freshness of ideas and feelings, and a grip on the realities of home, education and social well-being that are wholly beneficent, and that have a stimulating effect on their masculine colleagues and competitors.

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No, men need not fear their competition; it is only the women with exceptional capacities and a great reserve of vital force which they cannot employ in the home who want careers; not the average woman. If she has to work for a living she is willing to quit her work at any moment for a husband and home. The great women workers have all possessed this vital force; it enabled them not only to carry on their work successfully but in many cases to bring up large families with equal success. Mrs. Chisholm, Mary Somerville, Mrs. Pankhurst all had five or six children. The girls who take Firsts at Oxford and Cambridge are not puny bookworms; Miss Yoxall, who won a First in Classical Tripos, was captain of the Newnham Tennis Club, President of the Musical Society and editor of the college magazine. Miss Nettlefold, who passed brilliantly in Law, is a first-rate tennis player and sufficiently frivolous to be presented at Court, and when the legal profession seemed closed to her she adapted herself with amazing rapidity and success to business life. To confine such women to the narrow sphere of the home would be to do a grave dis-service to the nation. The average girl who is not compelled to earn her own living is not so keen about it as she was some years ago, when it was rather *the* thing to live your own life. Many who have no particular bent are quite content to stay at home and have a good time, particularly if they have not taken up work immediately on leaving school or college. So many sports are open to them, so many interests and so much freedom. The few who work because they love their work will be an asset to their calling.

Women, to succeed in the various callings and departments of life into which they are now pouring, have to work harder than men. This is obvious on all

sides : women students frequently work ten and sometimes eleven hours a day in their third year at college, and even before; very few men will be found exerting themselves to this extent. In offices women are paid less than men and often do the work better. A well-known publisher said to me some time ago that he finds women far more reliable and better workers than men, and they accept a less wage. They are, as a general rule, competent and conscientious. Opposition to them lingers in very few corners. One of these apparently is the Southampton Master Mariners' Club, which had a debate as to whether women should be allowed to command ships, and when a vote was taken only two out of thirty-five skippers were in favour. They got a good deal of fun out of the discussion; one old salt thought the "half-deck" would be converted into the "better-half deck"; another asserted there would be a run on "paint" and much going to the bo'sun for lipstick, while a third declared women have more nerves than nerve. The fair sex had one stout champion who spoke in terms of the strongest admiration of Mrs. Fry, wife of the commander of the training ship *Mercury*, who used to lead the boys over the mast-head and "set a perfectly wonderful standard," and would have made a "capable master mariner."

The taxi drivers too will have none of them; it is the only calling except Holy Orders from which they are shut out. The taxi drivers seem to be the most exclusive body of men in the kingdom; they threatened to strike "if one woman driver is licensed to take out a cab," and this attitude they have rigidly maintained.

Not long ago the Principal of Newnham called upon fathers to take their daughters into their businesses where possible. It is one of the great blessings of the emancipation of women, especially in these days of



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declining birth-rate, that daughters can now be trained to help their fathers. Fathers and daughters very often get on far better together than fathers and sons; the fact is the sexes are meant to help each other, and it is a happy day when they can find an opportunity for co-operation. Many fathers must have been disappointed in Victorian days when they had built up a big business and had no son to take it on after them, or if they had he was not interested, or had not the qualifications necessary for success. Now a father need only turn to his girls and they are very ready to help him, as an investigation into any department of life will show. A few examples must suffice. Miss Daphne Drake, whose father was an authority on stained glass, has been appointed glazier to Exeter cathedral, and elected an Associate of the Society of Master Glass Painters. A doctor whose three daughters were educated at Cheltenham now employs them, one as a junior partner, one as a dispenser and one as a chauffeur. I can imagine the fun the four get out of life together. Over a greengrocer's shop in Sevenoaks the other day I saw the name of the proprietor with the addition "and Daughters": a very praiseworthy innovation. The majority of the girls who are entering the learned professions are following the example of their fathers.

Writers like Miss Ethel M. Dell, with their strong silent heroes, have set up an erroneous standard of manhood. The male sex seem to be more sensitive than the female. How terrible is the anxiety of the small boy when his relatives are about to appear for the first time in the fierce light of one of his school gatherings, lest they should wear or do anything which might give rise to ribald remarks among his fellows. I know a small boy who turned faint and sick when he saw the famous

mummy at the British Museum, who certainly is very repulsive with his tucked-up knees; the same small boy had a similar seizure when he saw the iron cage in some northern castle where unhappy victims in olden times were left to starve. Another small boy had to leave hurriedly in the middle of a humorous entertainment because he was unpleasantly affected by a comic operation on a recumbent patient. I can recall no similar instances among girls. A lady doctor told me that on the occasion of a smallpox scare when she had to vaccinate the male clerks at a bank, they fainted one after another. A typical picture of the modern girl rises up before me, in fact my daughter, striding exultantly across the moors while three footsore boys tail dejectedly after her.

That women with all their grit and push and capacity for masculine tasks are still wholly feminine, I think is admirably demonstrated by that entirely new feature of modern times, the Lady Mayor. There surely never was a function more sweetly feminine than that unique and historic luncheon party to which Miss Margaret Beavan, Lady Mayor of Liverpool (Why will the Press insist on calling them Lord Mayors?) invited nine other Lady Mayors. It must have been a notable gathering; the good dames resplendent in plumed hats and ample robes of office, and wearing the heavy chains and medals as large as breastplates that seem to lend a quaintly humorous touch to the Mayoral figure. Smiling and benevolent, fully conscious of their importance, they lined up for the photographer, presenting a wonderful blaze of colour: scarlet and ermine, blue and gold. Thousands of curious eyes followed the regal appearing party as, escorted by their hostess, they went a tour of the city and viewed the gold and silver plate in the cathedral. The Socialist Lady Mayor of



LADY PUNTER AND SCULLERS TWENTY YEARS AGO



MISS MARGARET BEAVAN ENTERTAINS THE LADY MAYORS





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Deptford, Mrs. Beatrice Drapper, caused a sensation in that somewhat dingy locality as she departed for the gathering in her blue velvet robe. She would have been less than woman, too, if she had not taken pleasure in the fact that as sole representative of her sex among the Mayors of London she was the only woman out of three hundred guests at a banquet given by the Lord Mayor of London on the same evening to "meet the members of the Court of Common Council." That her attire on the occasion must have cost her some forethought is fairly evident from her naïve pleasure in the shining silver dress in which she caused a sensation at the Lewisham Mayoral reception after her presentation at Court. She presented so imposing a figure that the other guests greeted her with loud cheers and gathered round to listen to her description of the ceremony, and how her Court train had been held up by two of the Palace attendants. The fact that the position she has achieved is due to her brains and capabilities did not detract from her natural pride in her pretty clothes. A Lady Mayor is not elected for sitting twiddling her thumbs. For the last sixteen years she has been a Councillor, and for three years she was chairman of the Greenwich Board of Guardians; she is a J.P. and a member of the Food Council, and before she was married she was a swimming and gymnastic instructress. When she was elected Mayor there was only one dissentient voice, that of a bachelor.

In 1927, fourteen women were elected Mayors. An instance of their enterprise is afforded by Mrs. Foster-Welch, Lady Mayor of Southampton, who went for a five days' tour in America, travelling over 2,000 miles and receiving official welcomes from the Mayors of six towns. She was the first Lady Mayor to visit

New York. The Lady Mayor of Liverpool made a ten days' tour as guest of the Italian Government.

There is no sign at present that women who engage in serious occupations are becoming negligent of their charms; we often see charmingly neat heads and dainty frocks in shops and offices. At a recent business conference when the question whether good looks were a handicap to women in business life was debated by such authorities as Sir Woodman Burbidge and Gordon Selfridge, jun., the unanimous opinion was that good looks are an advantage; men prefer to work with a good-looking girl, and when there is a choice of two girls, the more attractive one obtains the post. It was stated that for a saleswoman good looks are a great asset. Miss Haslett, organizer of the Women's Engineering Society, was the only dissentient; she cited as an instance that when they put forward a woman for a drawing-office appointment quite recently the director frankly said she was too good-looking for the job and would probably upset the men at their work.

There is more freedom than there was in Queen Victoria's days because the world is a safer place to live in. We can walk fearlessly in a forest when all the wild beasts have been killed. We are steadily advancing, the idealists have shown us the way; every day sees improvement, in the widening of our thoroughfares, the designing of artistic and convenient houses, the invention of labour-saving devices, the preservation of open spaces, the clearance of slums. Hours of work are shorter, wages are higher, the people healthier and happier. Much still remains to be done, but it does seem as if we were heading in the right direction. In the twelve years before women had votes, only five measures were passed in the interests of women

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and children ; but in the last ten, twenty measures have been passed that affect their welfare. There are those splendid developments, the Girls' Friendly Society, with its ideals of purity and kindness, the Girl Guides with their high sense of honour and practical teachings, the Mothers' Union which upholds the sanctity of the home, and the Women's Institutes which have done much to break down class barriers and promote educational and social interests in country places. This movement which originated in Canada has been taken up with widespread enthusiasm in this country, every little village adding its quota. It has now 250,000 members and the numbers are still growing.

Another most useful scheme is the establishment of the Cecil Homes for Women. These are public lodging-houses for homeless women, established as a result of the experience gained by Mrs. Cecil Chesterton in the course of a fortnight which she spent as a vagrant in London. Over 11,000 people were lodged in the first Cecil Home in the course of the first nine months, and there was a profit of £41 on the expenses of upkeep, each woman paying one shilling a night. Forty of the women were found situations as domestic servants, and forty more as waitresses. Two of these Homes have already been opened in London, and the intention is to extend the number to nine.

“ All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of Good shall exist,  
Not its semblance but itself, no beauty nor good nor power  
Whose voice had gone forth, but each survives for the  
melodist  
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.”



# I

## THE PIONEERS

To realize the position of women at the beginning of this century we must look back at the dark conditions from which they had already emerged, thanks to the helping hands of a few heroic pioneers. In all ages there have been women of strong brain and dominant personality who rose above the limitations of their sex, but until the middle of the eighteenth century it did not occur to any of them to make a serious attempt to free other women from their fetters, nor that the sex as a whole possessed capabilities and energies which were lying dormant. This was the more strange because in feudal days women occupied a dignified position, but when the feudal system came to an end and people paid taxes instead of rendering service, women lost their high place. The Reformation in the sixteenth century and the Renaissance in the seventeenth century witnessed further stages in their enthrallment; as so-called Liberty evolved feminine freedom was restricted.

At the end of the seventeenth century the condition of women was probably at its lowest; for over a hundred years no great figure had appeared among them. They were brought up to believe in their complete dependence on man, and that both physically and mentally they were incapable of rising to his level. Little attention was paid to their education, and many ladies of birth and fortune could scarcely sign their

names. An attractive appearance and a capacity for self-repression were regarded as their greatest assets; they were the legitimate prey of man's animal passions; their understanding and character were derided, and they were held up to scorn in obscene lampoons. As for "old maids," a leading playwright assigned to them the duty of "leading apes in hell."

It is scarcely to be wondered at that the ideals of marriage were low, as the average age at which a girl married was seventeen, and in many cases she was only fourteen, thirteen and even twelve. At marriage her property passed into the possession of her husband, and she had no control over it or her children.

A few champions of the sex appeared: Daniel Defoe, writing in 1692, declared: "I cannot think that God Almighty ever made them so delicate, so glorious creatures, and furnished them with such charms so agreeable and so delightful to mankind; with souls capable of the same accomplishments with men; and all to be only stewards of our houses, cooks and slaves. . . . I would have men take women for companions, and educate them to be fit for it." Steele asserted in the *Spectator* that "the general mistake among us in the educating of our children is, that in our daughters we take care of their persons and neglect their minds," and in the *Tatler* that "the great happiness of mankind depends upon the manner of educating that sex." Far more audacious was a pamphlet, published in 1739 by "Sophie, a Person of Quality," entitled "Woman Not Inferior to Man," in which the author demands admission for her sex into every employment in the State, claiming there is no reason why they should not become generals and admirals.

As a result of the writings of Addison and Steele, in the middle of the eighteenth century blue-stockings



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began to appear in Society circles, and these in their brief reign established the right of women not only to read but to write books; Hannah More's books and pamphlets reached a sale of hundreds of thousands, and Fanny Burney's novels opened a new era in the writing of fiction. Then came the French Revolution, which had a profound effect in England; it aroused in English women a realization of the meaning of Liberty and inspired Mary Wollstonecraft to that great protest which was the first step forward: "A Vindication of the Rights of Women." In this pamphlet, while modestly allowing that women were physically and mentally inferior to men, she demanded opportunities of development for them within their limitations, to begin with a scientific training of the mind: "The grand source of female folly and vice," she declared, "has ever appeared to me to arise from narrowness of mind." She urged—years in advance of her time—that women should have the Parliamentary vote, be allowed to take their place in industry, and to practise medicine. She maintained that economic independence alone would free married women from the tyranny of their husbands, and save the unmarried from prostitution, but she also laid great stress on the duties of wives and mothers, and was emphatic that the best mothers would be those who had received a thorough education. In her day the book had little effect, women were not ready for its teachings.

But the industrial revolution was at hand and it completely changed the position. Up to this time women's labour had been concentrated in the home; there they wove their linen and homespun, baked their bread, cured their hams, distilled their medicines and cordials, and brewed their beer; there was plenty of occupation for every feminine hand. But when

machinery was introduced this was no longer the case, and women had either to stay at home and lose their work or follow it into the factory. There, though they suffered from low wages and unhealthy conditions, they learned to rely on themselves, and, eventually, the value of organization. The economic pressure which drove working women into the factory had its effect upon the position of the middle-class woman; an effect increased by a growing disparity in the numbers of men and women. In 1801 the sexes were comparatively equal in number, but towards the middle of the century the proportion of women, through such causes as war, emigration and dangerous employments, was greatly increased, and the country had to face the fact that further outlets for the employment of women, especially middle-class women, were absolutely essential.

The first to give voice to this crying need was Harriet Martineau, who, in an article in the *Edinburgh Review* of April, 1859, drew attention to the change in the position of women, declaring "if we do not attend to the fact in time the knowledge will be forced upon us in some disadvantageous or disagreeable way." She went on to say: "The era of female industrialism has set in, indisputably and irreversibly," but apart from work in the factories and the fields, she asserted there was a prejudice against the employment of women which compelled those who had to earn their bread "to do it by one of two methods—by the needle or by becoming educators." She quoted the following newspaper extract to support her statement: "A large, well-attended draper's and mercer's shop, in a good situation, became, by a sort of accident, the property of a benevolent and sensible person, who saw in the accident the means of employing female labour in a suitable department. He had always cried 'Shame'





A BRAKE PARTY TWENTY YEARS AGO



ON THE BEACH TWENTY YEARS AGO



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on the exclusion of women from the counters, where they could surely measure ribbons and cambrics as well as men. The well-stocked shop was served by women, picked for their aptitude and experience as well as their respectability. The old custom fell off, and the proprietor was assured that it was because there were only women behind the counter. It became necessary to introduce some shopmen to reassure the ladies who could not trust the ability of their own sex. Two shopmen were introduced. It would not do. They were worked off their feet while the shop-women stood idle; for the ladies had no faith in female ability, even behind the counter." This illustration was endorsed by the statement that although there were 29,000 shopkeepers there were only 1,742 shop-girls. Miss Martineau vehemently maintained that they must "supply the educational links that were wanted if they would render the powers and industry of women available for the welfare of Society. . . . In other words we must improve and extend education to the utmost and then open a fair field to the powers and energies we have educed."

A reader of this article, Miss Jessie Boucherett, felt she must help : she gathered a few friends together one day in the following June and they decided to try and get up a society that would provide technical instruction for women in such employments as were suited to their capacities.

The result of their determined efforts was that a "Society for Promoting the Employment of Women" was founded, with the Earl of Shaftesbury as President, the Bishops of London and Oxford, Mr. Gladstone and the Vice-Chancellor, afterwards Lord Hatherley, as Vice-Presidents, and a committee of twenty-two ladies and gentlemen. The first pupils were ignorant even

of writing and arithmetic, and this sort of instruction had to be continued until 1876, by which time some good middle-class schools were established in London. In 1860 a class was formed for book-keeping, followed by one for Law copying, and later for typewriting and shorthand. The Society also arranged to pay fees to any employers who would take young women into their studios and work-rooms as apprentices, and advanced the necessary money to start various enterprises, among others the Victoria Women's Printing Press, with Miss Emily Faithfull as first manager. Queen Victoria encouraged the Society with a message to the effect that "all such new and practical steps for opening new branches of employment to educated women must meet with Her Majesty's entire approval." But the Society could not cope single-handed with the growing demands of women, and in 1865 it was publicly stated that "the evils arising from the want of employment for women are of frightful magnitude and intensity."

There now appeared another pioneer, Maria Rye. As a child Maria had three favourite books, the "Bible," "Robinson Crusoe" and Mrs. Moody's "Roughing it in the Bush." From the Bible she learned that "The Earth hath he given to the children of men," and when she read about the charm of life in the wilds in the two other books she wondered why people herded miserably together in big towns instead of going out and taking possession of their heritage. When she was sixteen a young nurse girl with an unkind stepmother came to her for sympathy, and with this idea at the back of her mind she went round to the Park Street Emigration Commissioner, obtained a free passage to Australia for the girl, and sent her off. A little later she helped a school friend in the same way.



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Maria obtained the position of manager in a law-stationer's but did not drop her interest in emigration, nor in the cause of women, and when an active agitation against the law which deprived married women of the control of their earnings was set on foot, she wrote an article on the subject, which she sent to the *Englishwomen's Journal*. This publication had been founded in 1858 by Mrs. Bodichon, Mrs. Belloc, Jessie Boucherett and Adelaide Anne Proctor to give voice to the opinions of women, and in connection with it they had opened a Register of Women's Work. Maria's article was greatly appreciated by the four ladies, and seeking her out they enlisted her in their little band of workers.

In a paper on the Emigration of Educated Women which she read in 1861 before the Social Science Congress in Dublin Maria Rye stated: "My office is besieged every day by applicants for work. . . . Miss Faithfull at the Printing Press, Miss Crowe at the Register Office, and Mrs. Craig at the Telegraph Station have all a surplus list of applicants. A short time since 810 women applied for one situation of £15 per annum; still later 250 women applied for another vacancy worth only £12 a year (the daughters of many professional men being among the numbers), and at an office similar to those already alluded to, 120 women applied in one day only to find there was literally not one situation for any of them." Her remedy was emigration; there were good openings, she said, in the colonies for the educated class of women; Australia and New Zealand had 156,000 more men than women. She stated in a letter to *The Times* that she and her friends were in communication with the bishop and chief merchants or their wives, at Melbourne, Sydney, Natal and Canterbury, and she suggested that a

subscription should be raised to pay the expenses of the girls' journey out. Charles Kingsley also wrote to *The Times* to support Miss Rye's suggestion, declaring that of all the schemes to help governesses this was "the only one on which a practical man can look with unmixed satisfaction." In response to these appeals the public subscribed £500, and a part of this sum after being lent to young women, wishing to go out, over and over again and being repaid, was still in use thirty-five years later. In May, 1862, the Female Middle Class Emigration Society was formed.

Miss Rye had sent two shiploads of women to British Columbia and 100 women to Brisbane before it occurred to her with something of a shock that she was sending all these women out to the Colonies without any personal knowledge either of the countries or the conditions to which they were going. She therefore left her friend, Miss Lewin, in charge at home, and started off with the next hundred women to New Zealand, where they arrived, she wrote, after "a glorious passage" of ninety-eight days. Miss Rye visited various towns both in New Zealand and Australia, improving emigration arrangements, and at Melbourne persuaded the Government of Victoria to make a change in the administration of the funds they had voted for sending out young women from England. These funds had been placed in the hands of the Park Street Commissioners, and the Australian Government could not understand how it was that although Miss Rye had been inundated by applications from would-be emigrants very few had actually applied for a loan. Miss Rye explained that the administration of the fund in London was left mostly in the hands of a staff of male clerks to whom the women had to make their applications, and who thought it amusing to ask the girls



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if they were "going out to get a husband," which annoyed them immensely. Miss Rye suggested that women should administer the funds, and the Government agreed, undertaking to pay office expenses in London, Miss Rye offering to give her services free. Large parties of women now began to go out to Australia and Canada every year. Miss Rye also founded a Home where poor girls could be trained for the Colonies, and during the next twenty-five years she sent out 4,000 girls from the slums, thus giving them the opportunity of a respectable, prosperous life. Miss Rye's farewell letter contained the significant statement: "I consider that 4,000 girls equal as far as anxiety, oversight and care are concerned, at least 10,000 boys."

There had been an earlier and more isolated worker in the cause of emigration, whose efforts for a long time received no support, sympathy nor comprehension—Mrs. Chisholm. As a girl she determined to devote her life to the cause of women, and when Captain Chisholm proposed to her she gave him a month to decide whether he would care for a wife who meant to carry out what she considered her duty. He was willing to take the risk. At first no opportunities offered, but in 1830, two years after the marriage, they were stationed in India, and seeing how neglected the soldiers' little children were she opened a school which grew rapidly in size. In 1838 she went with her husband to Australia. Numbers of emigrants were arriving at the time, and Mrs. Chisholm soon saw that the condition of the girls was often pitiable; many were not only friendless but in a state of absolute destitution. On one occasion 64 girls were landed having between them fourteen shillings and three halfpence. There were known to be 600 of these friendless girl

immigrants wandering about Sydney. Mrs. Chisholm began by taking nine at a time into her own home, but this was quite inadequate and she agitated for a Home where the girls could stay until they got situations. The Governor, to whom she applied, regarded her as a lady "labouring under amiable delusions," and told her plainly she had over-rated her powers. At last, on receiving a guarantee that the Government should not be put to any expense, he allowed her to use part of an abandoned Government building. Mrs. Chisholm placed her children in the charge of a friend and gave up her pretty cottage. A room was made ready for her in the Government building, but she had no sooner put out the light and got into bed than she was aroused by the noise of the rats with which the place was infested, and three dropped upon her shoulders. Her first impulse was to throw a cloak round her and rush out of the place, but she reflected how much amusement this would cause; it would ruin her plans. Resolutely she broke up the bread and cheese she had brought with her and strewed them on the ground, and sitting up till it grew light watched the rats eating; next night she added arsenic to the food, and at last rid herself of the pest. Before very long she had 96 girls in the Home, and the public began to subscribe. She opened a registry office but found it necessary to obtain situations for the girls up country as well. They were afraid to go alone, and she started a system of protected parties, taking with her from 15 to 60 girls at a time, and travelling about with them until she had found situations for them all. She and her horse soon became well known throughout the colony and everyone had a welcome for her and her girls, providing them with everything free. A boatman when offered his fare said: "May my arm

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wither in the socket if I ever touch money of yours."

She also helped families to settle, and at the end of seven years 11,000 persons had been settled by her in New South Wales, at an out-of-pocket cost of £1 18s. 6d. In 1846 she returned to England with her husband and set herself the task of reuniting separated families; she induced the Government to grant free passages to deserving cases. Her house became the Emigrants' Information Bureau. Her mornings were devoted to correspondence with the help of six clerks, and in the afternoons she went to the docks and supervised the arrangements on the emigrant ships, and the evenings she devoted to her husband and six children. She continued this work for twenty years. The *Westminster Review* said: "Mrs. Chisholm has done more for the moral regeneration of the Australian colonies than all their clergy with their four bishops to boot," and Lord Sherbrooke declared: "The singularity of her mission, looking at the nature of her work, is one of the most original that was ever devised or undertaken by either man or woman, and the object, the labour and the design are all beyond praise."

Emma Paterson was the pioneer of Trades Unionism among women. She began her public career as secretary to the Women's Suffrage Association, and marrying in 1873, went on a tour in America with her husband to study the working of friendly societies there. Attendance at three successive annual congresses of Trades Unions, at which it was persistently asserted that women were incapable of forming Trades Unions, made her decide to start a society which was called the Women's Protective and Provident League, to help women earning their own livelihood

to combine for the protection of their interests. In the course of the next few years a number of tailoresses, dressmakers, milliners and mantle makers were induced to join, and in 1879 the League numbered 1,300. In those early days it was found that in many cases an attempt to form a combination among women met with the open hostility of their employers. Mrs. Paterson died in 1886 and was succeeded as Secretary to the League by Miss Clementina Black, who in 1889 was followed by Miss Holyoake. The first fruits of the work was seen by a strike of the girls in Bryant & May's match factory, promoted by Mrs. Annie Besant, which resulted in a large increase of wages for the girls and the formation of a union numbering 1,000.

There is another woman who cannot be omitted from this record, Josephine Butler. More obloquy was heaped upon her than any other woman has probably ever had to endure; yet now in the years of her centenary she is regarded as "the most distinguished woman of the nineteenth century." In her time vice for men was regarded as inevitable; it was expected of every man that he should sow his wild oats, and the feminine sex was lightly esteemed. The natural result of this tolerant attitude was widespread venereal disease; it was so rife in the army and navy that the Government became alarmed, and in 1865, 1866 and 1869 the Contagious Diseases Acts were passed which forced prostitutes to submit to an examination by a doctor. They had to go in the broad light of day to be examined, followed by obscene jests, and in order to face the ordeal many went drunk. If pronounced free from disease they returned to their trade. One unfortunate and innocent woman was arrested by mistake under these conditions, and felt so deeply



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humiliated that she committed suicide. In those Victorian days, although so much latitude was allowed to men it was always *sub rosa*; the resultant disease was alluded to in obscure terms, and no doctor could frankly tell his patient that he had contracted it; to do so was actionable. Parliament could discuss the subject only behind closed doors, and it was never mentioned in public nor in the Press. To fight the evil would have been difficult for a very courageous man, yet it was this woman who made it the task of her life: a little, lovely woman, delicate, slim and gentle, with a musical voice; the wife of a University professor, and a pattern of the domestic virtues. She inherited her burning zeal from her father, who raged against oppression and had lifted his voice high in protest for the first Reform Bill, the Abolition of the Slave Trade, and Free Trade. At Oxford in the early days of her marriage Josephine would listen to the conversations of her husband's colleagues with a sore heart. They regarded a moral lapse on the part of a woman as unforgivable, and thought a pure woman should be entirely ignorant of vice and its effects. Once much moved by the wrongs of a very young girl she urged that the man should be punished, to be met by the cold reply that it could only do harm to open up such a question; it was dangerous to arouse a sleeping lion. The case of a young mother who was in Newgate for the murder of her infant aroused her warm sympathy, and when the poor girl was released she took her into her own house as a maid, the first of an army of poor women whom Josephine and her husband welcomed, for Mr. Butler shared his wife's views. He was a devoted husband, declaring in one of his letters to her that she had given him such a share of human happiness as falls to the



lot of few. "No words can express what you are to me."

Mr. Butler was Vice-Principal of Cheltenham for twenty-five years, and in 1866 he became Principal of Liverpool College. Education was naturally a question in which the Butlers and their circle were deeply interested; Frederick Myers, who was a great friend of theirs, gave up a lectureship at Trinity to devote himself to the promotion of the higher education of women, and he and Josephine worked hard on the North of England Council.

The Butlers had a terrible sorrow in the death of their much loved little daughter, and to still her aching heart Josephine determined to search out others who were in trouble and try to help them. She visited the huge Liverpool workhouse, containing 5,000 persons, and found her way into the cellars, which were thronged not only with women who came there voluntarily for a night's lodging, but also with prisoners convicted of fighting and brawling, theft and drunkenness. She sat on the damp stone floor and joined in their task of picking oakum. When friendly relations were established she proposed they should learn a few verses from the Bible to say to her, with quite astonishing results. Her next thought was to found a Home where these unfortunate women could learn some method of livelihood and have a new start in life. She took some of them into her own home, and one poor girl in an advanced state of pthisis she nursed devotedly until her death.

Josephine Butler was accustomed to travel on the Continent a good deal more than most Englishwomen of her class; she made many valuable friends and acquired a broad outlook. It was in Paris that she first heard of the medical examination to which



AT HENLEY, TWENTY YEARS AGO



COACHING PARTIES AT ASCOT FIFTEEN YEARS AGO



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prostitutes had to submit. When the Act of 1869 was about to be introduced in Parliament a small group of medical men who were greatly opposed to it, asked Josephine to join with them and help to fight it. She was terrified at the idea. "It is so dreadful, so difficult, so disgusting, that I tremble to think of it." For days she struggled with herself while her husband, pale and silent, watched her; then simultaneously they agreed she must help. She began by speaking to groups of men wherever she could find an opening, often during elections. Her plea was that there ought to be an equal moral standard for men and women, and they should be treated alike. It was unjust, she maintained, to punish the sex who are the victims and leave unpunished the sex who are the main cause of the vice and its dreaded consequences. The fact that the State recognized and provided convenience for the practice of a vice it declared to be necessary and venial, made the path of evil easy to their boys. The effect of the Act was to brutalize women while it did not remove the disease. It was highly unusual in those days for a woman to speak at public meetings; middle-class England shrank from her, the clergy held aloof, the medical profession for the most part opposed her; and her appearance on a public platform was a signal for an uproar. Some of her experiences were most painful. At Colchester during an election she was refused admittance at several hotels. Having at last found one that would take her, she went to bed tired out, only to be aroused by the landlord who begged her to leave at once as the mob had threatened to set fire to the house. She was warned not to let her friends call her by her name in the streets and had great difficulty in attending meetings, often having to slip out at the back before they ended. Her enemies



spread the report that some tragic unhappiness in her married life was the cause of her advocacy. Something of her suffering may be realized from a letter she wrote to Watts in 1895 when he had painted her portrait: "Your power has brought up, out of the depths of the past, the record of a conflict which no one but God knows of. . . . There were years in which my revolt was not against man, but against God; my soul went down to hell and dwelt there. It was a woe which has left its marks, long after peace has been restored, just as an old tree bears the marks of a storm by which it was blasted long ago, although the weather is so calm now that not a leaf stirs. Your picture has brought back to me all that I suffered, and the sorrow through which the Angel of God's presence brought me out alive." She persisted in spite of the storm of invective hurled at her by her persecutors, and in one year she spoke at 250 public meetings and 15 conferences. The struggle lasted for seventeen years, but because it was so protracted the interest it created reached a wide circle. Gradually she won them over, Church of England, Quakers, Unitarians, Nonconformists, they came over to her one by one, and before the end 7,770 Nonconformist clergy had signed the petition she drew up. The working classes, especially in the North, supported her. The first Parliamentary debate on the subject was in 1873; it was followed by a period of depression for the Cause and Mrs. Butler travelled abroad, endeavouring to enlist sympathy and writing "A Voice in the Wilderness." In 1883, owing to her persistent agitation, the question was brought up again in Parliament. While the debate was taking place Mrs. Butler and her friends and supporters met together and spent the time in prayer; they came out at half-past one in the morning to see the stars shining in a clear sky and to



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hear that there was hope for them. The actual Repeal, however, was not yet, and three more years went by before the Acts were finally removed from the Statute Book. Mrs. Butler died in 1906, sixteen years after her husband.

## II

### HIGHER EDUCATION AND UNIVERSITY LIFE

Two hundred years before the founding of Girton and Newnham Mary Astell wrote several books on the disabilities of her sex, and suggested the establishment of a ladies' college. The idea was regarded as an absurdity.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu wrote at the beginning of the eighteenth century : " We are taught to place all our art in adorning our outward forms, and permitted without reproach to carry that custom even to extravagance, while our minds are entirely neglected, and by disuse of reflections, filled with nothing but the trifling objects our eyes are daily entertained with."

More than a hundred years later Miss Frances Power Cobbe, alluding to the fashionable school at which she had been a pupil, said : " Nobody dreamed that any of us could in later life be more or less than an ornament to Society. That a pupil in that school should become an artist or authoress would have been regarded as a deplorable dereliction."

In 1775 Elizabeth Montagu proposed to found and endow a college for the higher education of women, but offering the post of Superintendent to Mrs. Barbauld, was crushed by the dictum of that monument of respectability : " Young ladies who ought only to have such a general tincture of knowledge as to make them agreeable companions to a man of sense, and to enable them to find rational entertainment for a solitary hour,

should gain these accomplishments in a more quiet and unostentatious manner—subject to a regulation like that of the ancient Spartans. The thefts of knowledge in our sex are only connived at while carefully concealed, and if displayed, punished with disgrace.” To close the subject once and for all she added pompously: “A woman is not expected to understand the mysteries of politics because she is not called to govern; she is not required to know anatomy, because she is not to perform surgical operations; she need not embarrass herself with theological disputes, because she will neither be called upon to make nor to explain creeds.” This opinion was endorsed by Dr. Gregory with a certain irony in 1784, in his “Legacy to his Daughters”: “If you happen to have any learning keep it a profound secret.”

In 1789 Hannah More determined to start a Sunday school in the village where she lived. This terrible innovation produced consternation among the farmers, who declared “religion would be the ruin of agriculture, and had done nothing but mischief ever since it was brought in by the monks of Glastonbury.” They put every possible obstacle in her way and refused to let her have any room suitable for the purpose, and when she gathered the children together under an apple-tree she was asked to go away because hymn singing had already blighted one apple-tree belonging to the owner’s mother. Hannah More’s own views could scarcely be considered enlightened; she strongly opposed the poorer classes being taught to write, and held that gaiety among them was not to be encouraged; her school treats included no games, no romping and no secular songs.

Mary Somerville, the earliest woman scientist, whose name is perpetuated by the first women’s college founded at Oxford, writing of her first experiences at school at the age of ten (in 1790) relates: “A few days

after my arrival, although perfectly straight and well-made, I was enclosed in stiff stays with a steel busk in front, while above my frock bands drew my shoulders back till the shoulder blades met. Then a steel rod with a semi-circle under the chin was clasped to the steel busk in my stays. In this constrained state I and most of the younger girls had to prepare our lessons. The chief thing I had to do was to learn by heart a page of Johnson's Dictionary. . . . From my earliest years my mind revolted against oppression and tyranny, and I resented the injustice of the world in denying all those privileges of education to my sex which were so lavishly bestowed on men."

Mary Somerville was first attracted to science by some algebra problems which had somehow found their way into a fashion magazine, and, having no one to advise her, she sought enlightenment in the pages of Robertson's "Navigation," with disappointing results. Happening some time after to overhear her drawing master advise two of his pupils to study Euclid's "Elements of Geometry" as it was the foundation of perspective, as well as of astronomy and mechanical science, she eagerly began to study Euclid and algebra by herself. She received no encouragement at home; her father, a bluff sea captain, said to her mother: "Peg, we must put a stop to this, or we shall have Mary in a strait jacket one of these days." Finding her obdurate they insisted that at least she should always have her needlework at hand and hide her books beneath it if anyone called. Mary Somerville did not in any way conform to the popular conception of a blue-stocking; she was a lovely girl, known as the "Rose of Jedwood," and kept her beauty to the last day of her long life. She loved dancing, music and plays, made all her own dresses even for balls, and

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## HIGHER EDUCATION AND UNIVERSITY LIFE

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was fully capable of taking her part in the work of the house. Nor was she by any means averse from marriage; she had three husbands. Her first husband, whom she married when she was very young, had a low opinion of the intelligence of her sex, and did not take the slightest interest in science. At twenty-one she was left a widow with two sons, and at twenty-four, marrying again, she continued her usual practice of dividing her time between her home and her scientific studies. She was thirty-two when she married for the third time, and in Dr. William Somerville found her true mate; he was proud of his wife's researches and stimulated her efforts.

The further she pursued her studies the more firmly she became convinced of the existence of an all-wise and loving Creator; science constantly revealed to her the marvellous workings of the Divine Mind. Yet she was preached against in York cathedral as an atheist because she maintained that the creation of the world had extended over an immense period of time. Her first important contribution to science was a paper on the magnetizing powers of the more refrangible solar rays, which she read before the Royal Society in 1826. In 1831 she published the "Mechanism of the Heavens," and with Miss Caroline Herschel was elected honorary member of the Royal Astronomical Society; they were the first women to be admitted to that body. When she was eighty-two she began a monumental work on Molecular and Microscopic Science which, when published seven years later, was pronounced to be a complete conspectus of some of the most abstruse scientific problems of the day. Always interested in modern developments she visited Watts's manufactory of steam engines in Soho soon after it was started, and thought the power exhibited almost fear-



ful. She died in 1872, at the age of ninety-two, having maintained almost to the last her regular habits of life: rising soon after six, breakfasting at eight, writing till her dinner at three o'clock, and again till six, when she would take a long walk, returning to tea at nine, and bed at eleven.

As teaching was practically the only employment open to women of the middle classes during the first half of the nineteenth century, many attempted to teach who had received no education themselves; it was only women with exceptional powers who had tried to surmount the difficulties of obtaining instruction. The first attempts at higher education were made with the definite object of raising the intellectual standard of this class of women. Progress was slow; girls were popularly considered less capable of mental cultivation than boys, and parents were afraid solid attainments would impair their chances of marriage. But the example of Mary Somerville and Harriet Martineau had its effect. Tennyson's "Princess" appeared in 1847, and its suggestive words echoed throughout the country:

"I would build far off from men a college like a man's,  
And I would teach them all that men are taught."

Mrs. Browning's "Aurora Leigh" was published in 1856. Charlotte Brontë, in spite of some painful experiences of school life, wrote with heat: "Believe me, teachers may be hard-worked, ill-paid and despised, but the girl who stays at home doing nothing is worse off than the hardest wrought and worst paid drudge of a school. Whenever I have seen not merely in humble but in affluent homes families of daughters sitting waiting to be married I have pitied them from my heart." The Brontës undoubtedly helped to make intellectual acquirements in women popular.



THE DUCHESS OF RUTLAND



MRS. A. L. SWYNNERTON, A.R.A.



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## HIGHER EDUCATION AND UNIVERSITY LIFE

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In 1843 Queen's College, Harley Street, was founded as a training school in connection with the Governesses' Benevolent Institution. Among the earliest pupils were Sophia Jex-Blake, who later made a fine fight for women doctors, and Dorothea Beale, who received one of the first examination certificates awarded to a woman in England, and in 1858 was appointed Principal of the Ladies' College, Cheltenham, where she proved to be one of the great pioneers of education. She was tactful as well as keen, and in her first Report promised to "preserve the modesty and gentleness of the female character." Her ideals were high, and her aim was to equip girls for useful work in the world. She taught them that marriage is to be regarded not as an object to be striven for, but to be received as the supreme grace of fate when the right time and the right person comes. There is a picture in the College which symbolizes her desire—Burne Jones's "Golden Staircase"—"that each girl should go out into the world carrying some beautiful instrument with which to utter the music that is in her heart." When matriculation was first opened to girls in 1869, one of the two who passed in it was a Cheltenham girl.

Frances Buss was another pioneer. Her aim was that class prejudice should be ignored and fees made so moderate that an excellent education might be within the reach of all but the poorest. She opened a school in North London which grew and flourished, and out of it arose the Girls' Public Day School Trust, the capital for which was found by forming a company. The Trust opened high schools for girls in a number of the larger towns, but as the shareholders expected immediate returns the Principals and their staffs were faced for years with continual limitations; they had to work very hard and exhibited much self-devotion. The schools

had no playgrounds, simply a yard for the middle of the morning "break," and no corporate games.

Miss Buss never lost an opportunity of interesting her pupils in social work, and enlisting their co-operation, and her centenary in 1928 was fittingly commemorated by the opening of a club for East End girls, to be known as the Frances Mary Buss House.

The names of the two great pioneers of education for girls are linked in the schoolgirl rhyme:

" Miss Buss and Miss Beale  
Cupid's darts do not feel.  
How different from us  
Miss Beale and Miss Buss."

In 1876 a commission appointed to inquire into the state of education in England reported that in many cases the girls' schools lacked proper organization, system and thoroughness, and neglected bodily exercise. People began to realize that the great obstacle to women's employment was lack of training, and it was not surprising that women whose only qualifications were energy and goodwill should be narrow-minded and unsystematic.

In the same year Miss Clough, intent on the higher education of women, founded the North of England Council, on which were represented associations of the school-mistresses in several large northern towns. Josephine Butler was president. She organized lectures for women and for working-men, which were most successful and helped to bring about the University Extension system which was first adopted by Cambridge. In 1868 a memorial was presented to Cambridge signed by 550 teachers and 300 others, which set forth the need felt by upper and middle-class women for higher examinations. Mrs. Butler talked to 48 of the leading men in Cambridge and



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## HIGHER EDUCATION AND UNIVERSITY LIFE

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obtained many signatures, and the final result of considerable effort was the establishment of the Higher Local examination.

The ten years between 1875 and 1885 witnessed extraordinary progress in the education of girls. Specially designed school buildings appeared in town after town, and the methods of teaching entirely changed. Four colleges were founded at the Universities: Lady Margaret and Somerville at Oxford, and Newnham and Girton at Cambridge. The Maria Grey Training College was also established for the direct purpose of training women for the work of teaching. The premises with which it started in Bishopsgate were soon found to be too small; in 1885 it was moved to Fitzroy Square, and in 1892 to its present commodious buildings in Brondesbury.

Girton under Miss Emily Davies held that women should have an equality of training and opportunity with men; Newnham under Miss Clough was less assertive; indeed, it was so modest that it did not like to call itself a college and went by the name of Newnham Hall. The earliest students began by attending special lectures of an easy kind, but by 1881 they were admitted to the more important classes; the successes of one or two students in Honours exams. proving that women are capable of intellectual attainments as great as those of the best men. In 1887 Agatha Ramsay was senior classic, beating all the men. Some examiners allowed them to sit for the Tripos, but they were rejected admittance to ordinary degrees. Liverpool was the first to admit them on an equality with men, and by 1910, all the universities had followed suit with the exception of Oxford and Cambridge. At Oxford a proposal to admit them was defeated by three to one. Bitter controversies raged; there were

demonstrations, fireworks; rotten eggs were thrown, and a woman burned in effigy. One Don urged a student "to do all in his power to preserve the honour and purity of his University." It was not till October, 1920, that Oxford decided to admit women graduates to degrees, and on the Queen was conferred the first honorary degree ever received by a woman. Clad in a scarlet gown, and wearing a mortar-board with a golden tassel Her Majesty walked from Balliol to the Sheldonian and took her seat by the side of the Chancellor, Lord Curzon.

The undergraduettes of the beginning of the century did not wear commoners' or scholars' gowns nor the Tudor cap, but hard sailor hats, long skirts, tightly fitting tailored coats, and their hair in buns. They could not shed their coats even during a heat wave, and must always appear in gloves and black shoes. They had to be correct in every detail, and their behaviour inconspicuous, for they were on sufferance. Bicycles were allowed although the opinion was publicly expressed that to ride a bicycle detracted from a woman's dignity. Chaperones were required for college breakfasts and Eights, and even at lectures that were not attended by other girls. In the early days the colleges were not full, and enthusiasm in work and play was characteristic of the students; everything mattered immensely; they were fully conscious of the fact that they had to establish traditions. They found it delightful after organized studies at school, to be free to arrange their work as they pleased. They saw far less of the men than the students of to-day. As far back as the eighties a boat on the river was coveted, and one memorable morning a kindly professor gave four girls an hour's coaching before breakfast, but the experiment was not repeated.

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## HIGHER EDUCATION AND UNIVERSITY LIFE

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One striking feature of the development of modern education is the growth of the system of large boarding schools for middle and upper-class girls, who in Victorian days would have remained at home under the care of a governess. The effect has been to give this class of girl much greater independence of outlook; they leave the shelter of the home and find themselves in a wide world of girls, among whom they have to make themselves a place and with whom they have to compete; they are far better taught than was possible at home, and encouraged in sports and athletics. But there are disadvantages. Miss Faithfull, late Principal of Cheltenham Ladies' College, the largest school of this class, says that "Excessive corporate life tends to submerge the individual in the mass, and to produce a respectable mediocrity." This criticism is applicable to the whole of modern life; in every direction standards are rising and individuals are less outstanding; we are all beginning to share the same advantages. The wireless is a wonderful leveller. The King and his humblest subject may listen to a concert at the same moment. We can discuss with our neighbours the Prince of Wales's speech at some great dinner; thousands of bedridden folk can hear the grand services in Westminster Abbey; and in one evening we can learn many facts about various subjects that might otherwise never have come under our notice. In a remote moorland village a farmer's wife discoursed to me about Oxford bags and the latest jazz music. Cinema pictures familiarize us with life in every part of the world; char-à-banc trips and foreign tours transport us at a cost within the reach of almost everyone to places our grandfathers never dreamed of visiting. Boys from the elementary schools go to France and Spain. The world is opening up to the man in the

street. Think what a difference it must make to the big business man that he can speak to towns in Australia in a couple of minutes, and that aeroplanes have attained a speed of 350 miles an hour. The Flying Age has opened in earnest; during the summer of 1928, fifty big air liners a day went in and out of the London air port at Croydon, carrying an average of 2,000 passengers a week, of which the proportion, curiously enough, was five women to four men. There are now air connections to towns in all parts of Europe, and as far afield as India, Persia and South America; across Africa, across India; all over the world airways are gradually being established by chains of aerodromes; before very long to be a town without an air port will be as bad as to be without rail or road facilities. All the nations on the earth are being brought into close touch with one another; Chinese and Japanese girls wear tunics and drill like our children, and questions on our Poor Law are set in their examinations; motor-cars may be encountered in the desert; the Hawaiian can enjoy the antics of Charlie Chaplin. The East is adopting the methods of the West; in every country in the world there is progress towards the same ends. We are all becoming more and more alike and less and less individualized.

To prepare our young folk to hold their own, education is administered in carefully concentrated doses. Each hour of the day is planned out in the great schools; to cover the syllabus the time-tables are crammed; no initiative is required on the part of the pupil, his time is mapped out for him. In the secondary schools the one aim of the teachers is to get the greatest number of pupils through the examinations; they are crammed in five or six subjects to the exclusion of others; matriculation is the first step to



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## HIGHER EDUCATION AND UNIVERSITY LIFE

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every coveted post. But matriculation is not sufficient for the higher grades, and the rather old-fashioned parent who tries to equip his daughter for a career is hard put to it to direct her progress. One examination seems a preliminary to others, her teachers continually urge new essays, and when the end seems in sight and she has passed through the University and obtained her degree, she is faced by the stunning fact that she is not really fitted for any career without a course of specialized training for a year or more. By the time some of the girls emerge their health has suffered from the excessive application that has been necessary. The time has certainly come when educationalists should aim at simplification; a simpler curriculum would afford a girl leisure to acquire the domestic arts and sciences which are often neglected in the modern educational time-table. That this lack in the education of girls is felt by many is evidenced by the establishment early in 1928 of Westonbirt, a large new public school for girls, the curriculum of which is based on a recognition of the facts, that although "Many women . . . become teachers or follow professions, more marry and become the mothers of the next generation." The belief of the governing body is that "for the average girl both the æsthetic and the domestic, practical and outdoor subjects offer a field of training which has been unduly neglected through the pressure of languages, mathematics and science." The Principal, who is without scholastic experience, looks "at the whole thing from the light of practical experience as a wife and mother," and as one "who has interested herself in social service and has done many big pieces of work and has high ideals for the girls of the Empire." Her candidature was strongly supported by the Duchess of



Atholl, Parliamentary secretary to the Board of Education.

The Duchess of Atholl was the first woman to hold office in the Ministry of Education. In her presidential address in the Section of Educational Science at the Conference of Educational Associations in 1928 at University College, the Duchess took for her subject the Broadening of the Outlook in Education; she said the history of education could be said to be the story of the broadening of the outlook. The child was essentially a practical being. His deepest instinct was to create and experiment; his highest ambition to imitate what he saw his elders doing. This desire to be of use seemed to her one of the finest instincts to be found in young people. She said we can no more afford to forget the need for co-operation between education and industry than to ignore the economic interdependence of the different parts of the Empire. Only by services of infinite variety demanding every possible exercise of human ingenuity can we hope to find employment for our dense and still growing population. In particular we in this country need the greatest possible development in varied ways of productive industry, as the Overseas Dominions need the development of their vast unpeopled territories.

In May, 1927, Oxford University passed a statute which admitted women to all the professorships, readerships and University teacherships. It was the logical outcome of all that had gone before. For several years women had been on the same footing as men in regard to pensions and discipline, and for the last three or four years they had been elected to the governing body. A similar statute at Cambridge was passed in the same year, granting to women the same privileges with two exceptions.



THE DUCHESS OF ATHOLL

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After considerable controversy between the heads of the University and seven representatives of the women's colleges a Statute of Limitation was passed at Oxford fixing the ratio of students at four men to one woman. The women's protest was, not that they objected to the proportion as the number allowed is considerably greater than that they had themselves already agreed upon, but they considered it infringed the liberty of the colleges which should have the right to determine their own numbers and new foundations. They maintained that there was no need to fear over-expansion. It was true that their numbers had increased from 395 in 1918 to 742 in 1925, the great increase being after the War, but there had been less since the passing of the women's statute in 1920, and the proportion was steadily diminishing. The cause of the increase had been the greater privileges granted by Oxford as against Cambridge, and also the higher standard of the applicants resulting from the improvement in secondary education. At Cambridge the Royal Commission considered a proportion of one woman to eight or ten men suitable.

Miss Ellen McArthur was the first woman to be awarded the degree of D.Litt. by the University of Dublin. Miss Eleanor Lodge, sister of Sir Oliver Lodge, the late Vice-Principal of Lady Margaret Hall, was the first woman to receive the D.Litt. degree at Oxford in 1928, and in the same year Miss Nairn won the gold medal and was the first woman to get Classical Tripos at Cambridge.

At the annual Conference in 1928 the National Association of Schoolmasters at Newcastle condemned the policy of the Board of Education in staffing, for economic reasons, junior mixed schools with women, which is resulting in the exclusion of men as heads

and class teachers. The indignity of expecting a man to go to a newly appointed headmistress for instructions was strongly resented. Statistics were advanced to show a proportionate shortage of 18,000 men teachers in the country compared with women.

Another subject for much debate is whether a woman should be allowed to continue to teach after marriage. A test case at Leigh resulted in pressure being brought to bear by the National Union of Teachers for the payment of a married teacher's salary. Local authorities settle the question for themselves.

Educational schemes of great interest are a residential college for working women at Surbiton, which provides a twelve months' course of general education based on the needs and desires of working women as expressed by themselves: Mr. Baldwin commended its very fine pioneer work; and Miss Margaret McMillan's open-air school at Deptford. She is the President of the Nursery School Association and describes the sun as the school's great doctor. She says what schools need is plenty of open space where the children can benefit by natural sunlight. She would like the school hours extended to nine, instead of five, in order that "the deadly evils of the slum homes may be overborne."

The Bloomsbury Trade School for girls, the first independent trade school for girls in the English educational system, has now reached its twenty-first birthday.

The first organized party of public and secondary school girls to visit an Overseas Dominion sailed in August, 1928, for a three months' tour, and travelled all through Canada to see the various aspects of life there. It consisted of twenty-five girls of seventeen or eighteen representing sixteen schools. In the same



year the first all-women English debating team left England to spend two months travelling through the south and middle west of the United States of America to match their knowledge, logic and humour against that of American men and women university students.

At the Conference of the British Association at Glasgow last September no fewer than twenty-six women read papers; Professor Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan was the chairman of the botany section.

Miss Dorothy Garrod, a daughter of Sir Archibald Garrod, Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford University, is considered a leading anthropologist, and a little while ago was awarded the Prix Hollandais (worth over £600) by the Institute of Anthropology for the best work of the year in physical anthropology.

### III

#### THE MEDICAL PROFESSION

WOMEN doctors are not a modern invention, nor peculiar to England. In Italy they were recognized and received academic degrees in the Middle Ages; they held important positions in France and Germany at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and in Russia a young woman who had the M.D. conferred on her was cheered by the male students and carried through the hall in triumph at the very time that in England Miss Jex-Blake was refused recognition. English hostility towards medical women dates back at least to the reign of Henry V; he received a petition "that no women use the practyse of fisyk under payne of long imprisonment."

The first step in the movement for women doctors was taken by Miss Jessie White, afterwards Madame White Mario, in May, 1856, when she sent a letter to the Registrar of the University of London asking whether a woman could become a candidate for a diploma in medicine "if on presenting herself for examination she shall produce all the requisite certificates of character, capacity and study from one of the institutions recognized by the London University." The reply was: "the Senate acting upon the opinion of its legal adviser does not consider itself empowered to admit females as candidates for degrees."

Elizabeth Blackwell was the first of the pioneers. She was born at Bristol in 1821, and in 1832 her

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## THE MEDICAL PROFESSION

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family emigrated to America. When old enough to earn her own living she began to teach. One day a friend asked her why she did not study medicine, adding: "If I could have been treated by a lady doctor my worst sufferings would have been spared me." Although the idea seemed impracticable Elizabeth determined to make the attempt, and in order to obtain the money for her training, taught by day and studied at night. After a time she began to look for a medical school and applied to four medical colleges in Philadelphia, but without success; in one case the Dean candidly remarked: "You can't expect us to furnish you with a stick to break our heads with." New York also refused her. She applied to twelve smaller schools and at length, in October, 1847, she received a letter stating that the Medical School at Geneva, New York, was prepared to receive her, the male students having passed a resolution: "That one of the radical principles of a Republican Government is the universal education of both sexes; that to every branch of scientific education the door should be open equally to all; that the application of Elizabeth Blackwell to become a member of our class meets our entire approbation, and in extending our unanimous invitation we pledge ourselves that no conduct of ours shall cause her to regret her attendance at this institution." The authorities apparently regarded the presence of Miss Blackwell as an advertisement, and the only rudeness she encountered was from members of her own sex.

In January, 1849, on obtaining her diploma, she wrote: "The admission of a woman for the first time to a complete medical education and full equality in the privileges and responsibilities of the profession has produced a widespread effect in America." In April of the same year she came to England and was received

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## BRITISH WOMEN IN TWENTIETH CENTURY

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as a student at St. Bartholomew's. One of her greatest friends at this time was Florence Nightingale, with whom she would sit over the fire and toast her toes and talk about sanitation. In due course she returned to America and built up a practice. "I live simply," she wrote to a friend, "trust in God and mock at the devil."

In 1853 she founded a small dispensary in a poor quarter of New York which grew into the "New York Infirmary for Women and Children" (the first to be conducted entirely by women doctors) and later developed also into a recognized college with a Chair in Hygiene to which she was unanimously elected. Miss Jex-Blake, then on a visit to America, was one of her first students.

In 1858 she came back to England and gave three lectures in London on the work of women doctors in the United States of America. The first of these at Marylebone Hall aroused an interest in the study of medicine in a "bright intelligent girl," Miss Elizabeth Garrett, later to achieve a world-wide reputation as Dr. Garrett Anderson. The Medical Act of 1858, framed without a thought of the female sex, involuntarily entitled Elizabeth Blackwell to claim to be registered, as it enacted that no *person* should be entitled to registration as a medical practitioner who had not qualified by passing the examinations of one of the existing medical boards in Great Britain, except those who had already secured a foreign degree and had practised prior to the passing of the Act. For eight years the name of Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell stood alone on the British Medical Register as the one woman doctor entitled to practise medicine in this country, because women who had not obtained a foreign degree prior to the passing of the Act had to be educated and

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## THE MEDICAL PROFESSION

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examined in order to be placed on the Register, and the medical school would not educate them nor the existing bodies examine them. She built up a practice in London, gave addresses and helped to found the National Health Society in 1871, never ceasing meanwhile to help other women in their struggle to enter the medical profession. Her health at length broke down and she retired to Hastings.

Elizabeth Garrett, the next pioneer, chose the medical profession "more from the strong conviction of its fitness for women than from any absorbing personal bias." She began as a nurse in Middlesex Hospital, studied in her spare time, and at length obtained permission to go round the wards with the house doctors, but the male students petitioned for her exclusion, and she had to give up. She applied to other medical schools but without success; one of the reasons always given being that as the examining bodies would not admit a woman to their examinations a school could not educate her to be an illegal practitioner. The College of Surgeons declared they would not countenance the introduction of women into the medical profession. After many inquiries Elizabeth Garrett found one examining body who would receive her; the Society of Apothecaries. When she applied to them their Counsel (Lord Hannen) decided that as the purpose of their charter was to enable them to regulate the trade of selling drugs, and there was no legal ground for refusing to allow a woman to sell drugs they could not refuse to admit a woman to their examination. The Society allowed Elizabeth Garrett to complete her studies privately under recognized teachers who demanded exceptionally heavy fees. She paid the fees, filled up the schedule of lectures and in 1865 her name was placed on the British Medical



Register as the first woman practitioner with an English diploma. In 1867, on four other women presenting themselves before the Society for examination, an agitation arose in the medical profession and the Apothecaries feebly declared they would no longer recognize certificates for private studies. This seemed to deprive women of their last chance. Miss Garrett had to go to Paris for her M.D. degree, acquitting herself brilliantly in the examination. She married J. G. S. Anderson in the following year but continued to practise. In 1866 she opened a dispensary in Seymour Place for women and children which developed into the New Hospital for Women.

The third pioneer in Great Britain was Sophia Jex-Blake, and on her the brunt of the battle fell. When she returned from America in 1869 the outlook for women doctors seemed hopeless. However, after a controversy lasting several months, she and four other women were admitted in Edinburgh as medical students. When they had studied there for six months, and two other women joined them, and it was realized that they were gaining prizes and honours in competition with the men, some of the professors and students began to agitate. The women applied for admission to the wards of the Infirmary, the men presented a petition against it and carried the day. The women were subjected to all sorts of petty annoyances and in November, 1870, matters came to a head; they arrived one morning at Surgeons' Hall for their lecture to find a large band of students gathered round the gates, which were promptly slammed in their faces. A few of the men, however, took their part, forced the gates open and insisted on their being admitted, the mob howling and yelling around. A sheep was thrust in before them as they entered the lecture-room. "Let



JUBILEE OF MISS LOTTIE VENNE



DAME MADGE KENDAL, D.B.E.



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## THE MEDICAL PROFESSION

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it remain," said the professor when he saw the animal, "it has more sense than those who brought it here." When the lecture was over the friendly students formed a bodyguard to escort the women safely to their rooms, and continued to protect them to and from the hall until the mischief makers grew tired.

The women again applied for admittance to the Infirmary and were again refused, one of the professors declaring that they were obliged to consider "the interests of the male students, whose feelings of delicacy were violated by the idea of the presence of women." These feelings of delicacy apparently impelled them to shout down Miss Jex-Blake and pelt her with peas when she rose to speak at one meeting. Professor Blackie consoled the women: "Well, ye can say now ye've fought with beasts at Ephesus." The students continued to behave in such a way that one of the girls sent a letter to the *Scotsman* (July, 1871) to say: "If the wish of these students is to bar our progress and frighten us from the prosecution of the work we have in hand I venture to say that never was a greater mistake made. Each fresh insult is an additional incentive to finish the work begun. I began the study of medicine merely from personal motives; now I am also impelled by the desire to remove women from the care of such ruffians."

One of the women passed an examination in chemistry which should have entitled her to the Hope scholarship (founded by a doctor out of the fees for his lectures to Society women). In vain Miss Jex-Blake demanded the scholarship for her.

For two years a bitter controversy raged; every possible obstacle was put in their way. Opponents of the women movement argued that it was a mere freak, a new way of getting a husband, that the girls wanted

opportunities of intrigue with the male students, that they were incapable of the prolonged study and strain, and that the study of anatomy was inconsistent with female modesty. Presidents of the colleges refused to present the women with the prizes they won. The Medical Faculty refused to grant them their third year matriculation tickets. The Obstetrical Society refused to allow a woman's name to be printed on the title-page of a monograph in which she and her husband had collaborated.

A committee was at length formed with great difficulty "to secure a medical education for women in Edinburgh." This committee obtained some financial backing, and permission for the women to enter the Infirmary, but the lecturers at Surgeons' Hall prohibited the attendance of women at any of the ordinary classes, and in 1872 the University Court decided to take no further steps to enable the women to study for a degree. An action to compel them was brought but it failed on the ground that the University Court had committed an illegal act in admitting them in the first place, and the sole result of the contest was that the women had to pay £844 for Law expenses. They continued the struggle for two years but in 1874 finally gave up all hope and went to London. They were met by various sympathizers, and after a time, with the invaluable help of Dr. Ainstie, Miss Jex-Blake and her friends founded the London School of Medicine for Women. Dr. Ainstie was the first Dean, Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell and Dr. Garrett Anderson were ardent supporters; a provisional Council was formed consisting of medical practitioners who "came to the aid of the women students in spite of an amount of opposition and obloquy which an outsider would hardly understand." The School started with twenty-three



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## THE MEDICAL PROFESSION

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eager students; there were no examinations open to them and no opportunities of attending at hospitals, and the examining boards had decreed that all students must pursue the bedside study of disease in hospitals of not less than a hundred beds. Three years later the authorities were still inflexible and the women began to despair; the lecturers declared it was no use continuing, the summer course was abandoned and the closing of the School seemed imminent. Then the tide turned, the Royal Free Hospital, which had no male school, offered to take women students. The London School of Medicine for Women took on a new lease of life and ever since has pursued a successful career.

Further agitation resulted in 1876 in the passing of a Bill "enabling" all British examining bodies to extend their examinations and qualifications to women; the King and Queen's College of Physicians in Ireland was the first to allow advantage to be taken of this permission, and Dr. Jex-Blake and others were admitted to the British Register through that college. A week later the Senate of the University of London agreed to admit women to its medical examinations and degrees.

In 1878 Dr. Jex-Blake began to practise in Edinburgh. In a letter to *The Times* in 1896 pleading for funds for a women's hospital she stated: "I have now been in practice for nearly twenty years, and during the whole of that time I have been receiving fresh evidence that there are a very large number of women, and especially of poor women, who will not accept the necessary treatment from a man and who have in many cases endured years of continuous suffering before they had the opportunity of obtaining relief from their medical sisters."

In the light of the struggle waged so bitterly in Edinburgh it was amusing to read in the press of October

27th, 1927: "Fourteen women students received medical degrees in Glasgow University yesterday, *no men qualifying*. The new doctors included a young Indian, Malur Lakshimiamma, a native of Madras, the first Eastern woman to qualify at Glasgow. She was given an ovation by the undergraduates. Wearing flowing robes under her academic dress, and with a single diamond set in the side of her nose and a cluster of sparkling gems at her ears, she made a picturesque figure."

In 1894 there were about 170 medical women on the Register, only a dozen of whom had qualified before 1880. Dr. Jex-Blake remarked: "Women are continually doing what men hardly ever attempt, viz., settling down in a strange place with no professional introductions to practise by purchase or otherwise; and if gifted with a moderate degree of patience and tact they do manage to succeed in a way that certainly goes far to justify their bold adventure." It is usually estimated that it takes five years to build up a practice that will afford a livelihood. Women who succeed in the medical profession can make a very comfortable income. There are many posts open to them, some under Government as physicians to the female staff of the P.O., as asylum inspectors, in fever hospitals; under the L.C.C. as school doctors, and so on. An important field is India; a number of doctors work under the Dufferin Fund besides assistant surgeons, and the various Missionary Societies educate and support a number of medical missionaries in India and elsewhere.

The New Hospital for Women founded by Dr. Garrett Anderson was moved to its present site in 1905, enlarged in 1910, and the name changed to that of its founder in 1918. Since then it has made steady progress without falling into debt. There is now a

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waiting list of 300. An appeal was made in 1924 for £75,000 for an urgently needed extension, and the greater part of this sum has been subscribed.

A memorial has been erected in Tavistock Square gardens to Dame Louisa Aldrich-Blake, who served the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital as acting surgeon for thirty years, and for eleven years was Dean of the London School of Medicine for Women. Not long before her death she was created Dame of the British Empire for her services in the cause of women. There are now 294 students in the School of Medicine.

A hitch has come in woman's triumphal progress in the medical profession, and great indignation has been aroused among medical women and their supporters by the action of five of the London teaching hospitals—St. George's, King's College, Charing Cross, London and Westminster hospitals—in refusing to accept any new entries of women medical students. Sir J. Purves Stewart, Senior Physician to Westminster Hospital, in a letter to *The Times* giving the reasons for this step, stated that so far as Westminster Hospital was concerned the decision had been reached after mature deliberation by the medical staff, the School of Medicine Committee, the House Committee and the Board of Governors; in the past Westminster had always been a school for men, the advent of women occurring for the first time during the War, when there was a temporary dearth of men, and a large temporary excess of women students stimulated by the "devoted and excellent War services rendered by women doctors during a time of national emergency." The temporary conditions having disappeared and the transient boom in women doctors having subsided he maintained there was now ample accommodation for women students in their own special teaching hospitals. He said that the

physicians and surgeons who had taught mixed classes had no fault to find with women as students but they were occupying places which candidly speaking would be more usefully filled by men. One hundred per cent. of the men who qualify remain in the profession, whereas about fifty per cent. of the women leave it a short time after graduation for marriage. With a few notable exceptions it was the ablest and best qualified women who thus forsook the profession. "It is surely uneconomic," he said, "for us medical teachers to train a mixed class to a high pitch of efficiency, knowing that the best of the women students . . . are unlikely to persevere." He mentioned other reasons such as the disinclination of some men students to sit alongside women in the class-rooms, the inevitable distractions that cannot but arise when attractive young men are continually associated with attractive young women, that certain subjects of medical study are bound to be distasteful to women when discussed in the presence of men, and that the opportunities for athletics must be less attractive. He summed up by saying that it is in the best interests of men and women students alike that women students in the future shall be trained separately from men, each in their own hospitals.

This letter aroused so much indignation that the Senate of London University appointed a committee, which included among its eleven members two women, Miss E. Strudwick, Principal of St. Paul's Girls' School, and Miss M. Tuke, Principal of Bedford College, to inquire into the matter. Meanwhile various supporters entered their protest. Dr. Graham Little, M.P., declared that "medical women make admirable wives and are naturally enough snapped up by the discerning men." Lady Frances Balfour was fiery: "I doubt very much if a hospital has the right



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to keep out women from hospitals supported by public money, and I hope all women will refuse to support in any way any hospital which seeks to prevent women from acquiring the medical training they desire." An inquiry was also undertaken by the Medical Women's Federation and a questionnaire sent to the thousand members of the Federation living in the British Isles, which elicited that the percentage of marriage is about sixteen per cent., of which six per cent. continue to work and ten per cent. retire.

Dr. Sloan Chesser demanded how it could be regarded as uneconomic if fifty per cent. of the women did marry: "how many child lives would be saved if the mothers of the country were educated in health and hygiene." She maintained that a woman doctor with trained mind and hands will make a better wife and mother, and as children reach adolescence a mother's energies are less and less required for the family sphere, so that in the prime of life she can once more give her knowledge and personality to the community. She said: "The world needs women doctors more and more, especially as the health and sanitation problem in India is coming to be seriously tackled. . . . The best work in the world is done by men and women working together for the common good." Sir J. Purves-Stewart, replying to some of the protests, declared: "The experiment of co-education of medical undergraduates of both sexes has now been tried, with every good will on the part of the teachers, for over ten years. It has proved unsatisfactory."

The Six Point Group of which Lady Rhondda is chairman, forwarded a resolution of protest to the governors of the various hospitals, pointing out that it reduced the possibility of obtaining the best possible students of medicine, and that the demand for medical



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women in this country and in India increased yearly both for maternity work and general practice, and in the public health services. "The Six Point Group," the letter concluded, "stands for equal occupational rights for men and women, and protests against the action of the hospitals as unfair, retrogressive and unscientific." The joint committee of women's organizations to promote equal opportunities for women with men in the medical and hospital services issued a memorandum urging the need of reversing the decision of the five hospitals, in which they stated that there is at present only one medical school, the London School of Medicine (Royal Free Hospital), reserved exclusively for women, and the University College Hospital Medical School does not allow more than twelve women entrants, of whom eight are taken from University College. Thus only 300 women are provided for now that six hospitals have closed their doors to them. What is to become of the other 300 who make up the average number of women medical students? The memorandum inquired: "If men cannot bear to receive instruction in the ward or the class-room with women medical students, how can they co-operate in the intimate offices of the sick room with women nurses? And how can they assure those women patients who hesitate to employ a male practitioner that their attitude is purely scientific and humanitarian, stripped from the consciousness of sex?" The memorandum further stated that the number of women medicals will in all probability increase owing to the increasing demand for women doctors under local authorities in child welfare and maternity clinics, and the extreme probability that within a few years the system of National Health Insurance will be extended to cover dependent wives and children, or a National Health Service covering these



LADY RHONDDA

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classes will be set up. It is continually urged as a protest against medical women that there are already too many doctors, but working-class patients and their ailing children who have to spend many hours awaiting their turn to be treated every time they visit a hospital, would scarcely endorse this statement. That there is jealousy of the woman doctor I regret to say seems obvious from the fact that women are no longer allowed to take house posts in any but two of the children's hospitals, although in the War every hospital for children had women on its resident staff. Owing to the uncertain conditions the number of women entering as medical students in 1928 declined by almost a half.

Nursing as a profession has very much improved since the days of Florence Nightingale, who was the first to give it a status; her work in the Crimea was universally recognized as showing organizing power of a very high order. When a grateful public recognized her services by raising a large sum of money she asked that it might be devoted to the training of hospital nurses, and the Nightingale Fund School was started at St. Thomas's Hospital. After seventy years of existence it still maintains its reputation as the best of the training schools. Last year it had 156 probationers. But one school was of course insufficient to cope with the demand for skilled nurses, and at the end of last century the conditions of the nursing profession were still very bad; the hours were long, holidays short, and the work of the most trying description. In Nursing Institutes and Homes for lack of funds the dietary was often very poor and the staff insufficient. From £25 to £30 was the average money payment of a trained nurse, and the matron of a hospital received from £50 to £100.

During the Boer War "it was indescribably sad to

see the long rows of patients on hard beds, lying lonely and forlorn without proper nourishment or comforts, and no women to tend them.' This was in the hospital at Tin Camp, two miles from Ladysmith, which was organized without women nurses, and while only staffed for 50, received 300 patients. The four Kilburn Sisters who went out to nurse the sick and wounded, paying all their own expenses, and for many comforts for their patients from the War Fund raised by the Sisterhood, began by taking charge of four wards in a hospital at Durban containing 170 patients. From there they went to Ladysmith, where with four other nurses they had charge of 1,300 patients, and it was not until these were convalescent that they were able to devote themselves to the neglected hospital at Tin Camp. How different were these inadequate arrangements from the splendid nursing organizations of the Great War. However, even at the beginning of the century there was hope for the nursing profession. Midwives were no longer ignorant and inefficient but were rapidly changing into trained and skilled nurses, and co-operative associations of nurses were being formed.

Even now, in spite of great improvement in conditions, there is still some talk of the unsatisfactory status of the nurse in Great Britain, and complaints are made of the inadequacy of the salaries, some of the younger nurses receiving only £35 a year; but it is impossible to increase the expenses until the funds of the hospitals are in a more satisfactory position. The Rose Day, instituted by Queen Alexandra, has been of enormous help, but most of the large hospitals are still calling out for funds. One of the most satisfactory solutions of the problem is a weekly payment of threepence to be made by all those who are likely at some time or other



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to require hospital attention; but so far this practice has not become general.

One reason for the enormous increase in work and expenditure in which the hospitals are involved is the accidents on the road; some hospitals are crowded out by these cases, sometimes half the beds are occupied by the victims; it is a heavy burden, as many of the patients do not belong to the district in which the hospital is situated, and have neither contributed to its support nor are in a position to pay.

At present there are not many openings in dentistry as the clinical system is not fully established, and very few women students, only about one to every fifteen men. The training is long, four years for the diploma course (L.D.S.) and five for the B.D.S. (Bachelor of Dental Surgery). It is also expensive, as each student has to provide her work-room tools and instruments. The first two years are devoted to the mechanical side of dentistry. The hours are from nine to five, and nine to twelve on Saturdays. The last two years are devoted to the conservative part of dentistry (fillings) and extractions. One of the staff at the Royal Dental Hospital, Leicester Square, stated: "The women should be equal to any men dentists. There is nothing in dentistry that a woman cannot do, and as for strength—well extraction is more a matter of knowledge than of strength. Children certainly prefer a woman dentist."

I cannot close this chapter without a brief mention of Dr. Scharlieb, the oldest, the most famous and the most energetic of our women doctors. Left a young widow with three children to bring up on an insufficient income, she qualified as a doctor and embarked on a long and honourable career. Now at the age of eighty-two she is still a most efficient surgeon, often performing two or three operations a day, and always seeing a large

number of patients morning and evening, besides which she finds time to write books and articles and to lend her support to every effort to promote the health and welfare of women and children. Her Victorian figure is hailed with delight on many important occasions.

## IV

### THE FIGHT FOR THE FRANCHISE

WOMEN have at last won the right to vote on an equality with men after a struggle that, in its active stages, lasted for sixty-one years. During the whole of that time they did not cease their efforts; they realized from the beginning that "the vote is the one essential thing; it includes every other liberty." The fight was hard and bitter, degenerating at times into scenes of physical violence and destruction of property that are amazing to read about in cold blood, but to which the women were wrought up by the apparent hopelessness of their cause. It was not until they had tried every other means that, as men have always done in a similar case, they resorted to violence. On forty-two occasions Members of Parliament who had promised to bring forward a Bill to redress their wrongs, had failed them. Nothing remained but the appeal to force, which was undertaken not willingly but with grim determination, and how it would have ended who can tell, if the War and the opportunities the War afforded, had not convinced the nation to a man that the women's Cause was just.

In the history of the long struggle, which involved thousands of heroic women, two figures are pre-eminent, Mrs. Fawcett, the patient, untiring propagandist, and Mrs. Pankhurst, the fiery apostle and martyr. The successful issue was due to the efforts of both, each in their different way.

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The starting-point of the modern movement for Women's Suffrage was the publication of Mary Wollstonecraft's "Vindication of the Rights of Women," in 1792. Her husband extolled Mary as a "worshipper of domestic life."

The help and co-operation of women were welcomed by political leaders as far back as the days of the Anti-Corn Law League, which prided itself on its band of women workers, and Cobden expressed a wish that women could vote at one of their big meetings in 1845. Three years later Disraeli said in the House of Commons: "In a country governed by a woman, where you allow women to form part of the other estate of the realm—peeresses in their own right, for example—where you allow women not only to hold land but to be ladies of the manor and hold legal courts, where a woman may by law be a churchwarden and overseer of the poor—I do not see, when she has so much to do with the State and Church, on what reasons, if you come to right, she has not a right to vote."

In 1850 Lord Brougham's Act was passed which enacted that in all Acts of Parliament words imputing the masculine gender shall be deemed to include females unless the contrary is expressly provided. Some people believed this meant the enfranchisement of women. In 1851 the Sheffield Female Political Association passed a Resolution in favour of Women's Suffrage, the first of the kind in England, and in the same year the wife of John Stuart Mill wrote an impassioned article on the subject in the *Westminster Review*; unfortunately she died soon after, but her death brought her husband into the Cause, because "she would have wished it." He stated that he was prepared "to work for her purposes with such diminished strength as could be derived from thought of her and communion with

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her memory." In 1865, when he was standing as Parliamentary candidate for Westminster, he brought the question for the first time before English electors, and it was in his book the "Subjection of Women" that their cause was first adequately pleaded. He declared that complete equality between the sexes was the only just basis for any Law, and he condemned in particular the Act then in force, which took away a woman's property on her marriage and forced her into complete dependence on her husband.

In 1866 Miss Emily Davies, a quiet, gentle little woman, who helped at a later date to found Girton and became its first Principal, came with a friend to Mill with the first petition for Votes for Women; among the names inscribed upon it were those of Mary Somerville and Mrs. Henry Fawcett, who had attended one of his meetings in the previous year and from that time never ceased her efforts for the Cause until it was victorious fifty-two years later. Mrs. Fawcett had a keen and able supporter in her husband, the famous blind Professor of Political Economy, later M.P. for Lambeth and Postmaster-General. It was in their drawing-room that the first Women's Suffrage meeting was held in Cambridge.

In 1867 John Stuart Mill brought in a Women's Suffrage amendment to the Reform Bill; it was defeated. In the same year over 6,000 women householders, led by Miss Lydia Becker, claimed the right to vote, and in order to obtain a legal decision in view of Lord Brougham's ambiguous Act, four cases were selected and argued before the Court of Common Pleas on November 7th, 1868. Sir John Coleridge and Dr. Pankhurst pleaded for the women; the latter, an able barrister and intimate friend of John Stuart Mill, was deeply interested in the women's Cause, and eleven



years later became the husband of Mrs. Pankhurst. The case was given against the women, the judge deciding that although the word "man" must be held to include women "this did not apply to the privileges granted by the State," or, as a report of the Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage put it: "The same words in the same Act of Parliament shall for the purpose of voting apply only to men, but for the purpose of taxation shall include women." Meanwhile a second petition signed by 1,605 women was presented. This agitation and Florence Nightingale's splendid work in the Crimea had an effect upon the imagination of the public and strengthened the women's Cause. In 1869 Jacob Bright introduced a Bill which granted Local Government franchise to women, and in 1870 W. E. Forster brought forward the first great Education Act, which granted women the right to vote and to be elected on the Education Boards. Emily Davies and Mrs. Fawcett's sister, Elizabeth Garrett, afterwards Dr. Garrett Anderson, were the first to be elected; Lydia Becker was elected on the Manchester Board and sat on it until her death twenty years later; Dr. Flora Stevenson was elected on the Edinburgh Board, remaining on it until she died thirty-three years later; for the last five she was chairman. The centres which these women represented provided the societies which together formed the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies. From this time sex disqualification gradually disappeared from the Local Government electorate. In 1875 women sat on Boards of Guardians and in 1888 began to vote for County Councils. In 1889 two women were elected on a County Council, but a petition prevented them from taking their seats and it was not till 1907 that an Act was passed removing their disability.



MISS CHRISTABEL PANKHURST



MRS. PANKHURST



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Meantime, in 1870 Jacob Bright brought in the first Women's Suffrage Bill, called the Women's Disabilities Removal Bill, to give votes to women on the same terms as men; it was drafted by Dr. Pankhurst and reached a second reading before it was blocked.

In 1873 11,000 women signed a Memorial, and much encouraged when Disraeli came into power in 1874, they started a very active propaganda, holding a hundred meetings in six months. They knew he had declared: "In the present age and in the existing circumstances of the country the best way to maintain and strengthen the character and function of the House of Commons is to establish them on a broad popular basis." But time passed on and although Joseph Chamberlain was of opinion that "the wider you lay the foundation of your liberties and institutions the more stable those liberties and institutions will be," and urged that the greatest possible number should be called in to share in the work and responsibilities of government, because great social questions can only be satisfactorily settled when the whole of the people take part in the work of legislation, yet nothing was done and in 1884 Gladstone became Prime Minister. He proved an obstinate opponent, declaring that the Government had introduced into the New Reform Bill as much as it could conveniently carry, and women's suffrage "would overweight the ship." He said he "feared voting would trespass upon their delicacy, their purity, their refinement, the elevation of their whole nature"; and when Mr. Woodall moved a Women's Suffrage amendment, he stoutly declared: "I offer it the strongest opposition in my power, and I must disclaim and renounce all responsibility for the measure should my honourable friend succeed in inducing the Committee to adopt the amendment."

Lord Randolph Churchill and Sir Algernon Borthwick suddenly had a bright idea: to form a Primrose League and secure the political services of women; with so brilliant a result that one excited Liberal candidate was moved to call the ardent workers "filthy witches," and to declare emphatically that Mrs. Fawcett "had disgraced herself." The Liberals, however, not realizing that imitation is the sincerest flattery, started a similar association, which they called the "Women's Liberal Federation," with Mrs. Gladstone at its head "to help our husbands"; but when a daring Member brought forward a Women's Suffrage Resolution, the anti-suffragist section took alarm, and retiring from the Federation formed a new organization known as the Women's Liberal Association. In view of the fact that the Liberal party in a paper of printed instructions for those who wished to work for the Cause urged: "Make all possible use of every available woman in your locality," it is curious that the chief opposition throughout the whole of the campaign came from their party.

In 1889, strange to say, opposition to Women's Suffrage was actually organized by three influential women: Mrs. Humphry Ward, Miss Beatrix Potter (Mrs. Sidney Webb) and Mrs. Creighton. The two latter were afterwards converted to the Cause, but Mrs. Humphry Ward, in spite of her own brilliant gifts and grasp of political requirements, persistently maintained that "the political ignorance of women is irreparable and imposed by Nature." Later on she formed the Anti-Suffragist Society, which, however, encouraged the representation of women on Municipal Boards.

In 1892 Sir Alfred Rollit introduced a Women's Suffrage Bill which was defeated by a mere twenty-



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three votes, as all parties were afraid of losing the support of women.

In 1893 Women's Suffrage was adopted in New Zealand and South Australia. Seventeen years later both Houses of the Commonwealth Parliament declared the results were "most beneficent . . . and because the reform has brought nothing but good, though disaster was freely prophesied, we respectfully urge that all nations enjoying representative government would be well advised in granting votes to women."

In 1896 a petition was signed by more than a quarter of a million women, and in 1900 Lord Denman brought in another Women's Suffrage Bill. But the South African War had caused a complete suspension of the women's activities, and Mrs. Fawcett was out in South Africa on a commission to inspect the Concentration camps.

With unconscious irony the obituaries of Queen Victoria extolled her fine political qualities, and particularly her grasp of foreign affairs and the need for National defence, yet women's franchise was as far off as ever. It is true Lord Haldane and Sir Edward Grey brought in a Women's Bill in 1901, but when asked what they were going to do, answered: "Nothing . . . no push from the electorate." Three successive Prime Ministers, Beaconsfield, Salisbury and Balfour, and the leader of the Conservatives, Bonar Law, had been in favour, but each one hesitated to move because the rank and file were hostile. As Herbert Gladstone said to a Suffragist: "You have to move a great inert mass of opinion which, in the early stages, always exists in the country in regard to questions of the first magnitude." The hostility of the Liberal leaders was implacable, and even friendly M.P.s thought nothing of breaking their promises, in spite of a grow-

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ing non-party majority. Clearly the hard and persistent work of Mrs. Fawcett and her followers was not enough.

It was at this juncture that the Pankhurst star rose on the horizon. Mrs. Pankhurst was peculiarly fitted to be an apostle of the women's Cause. Her father, who had nearly lost his life in the Peterloo franchise riots of 1819, used to ask her to read his newspaper to him at breakfast at an age when most children are in the nursery, and her mother took her to Suffrage meetings at which Lydia Becker spoke. When she was thirteen she went to school in Paris, and her great friend was Henri Rochefort's little daughter. In 1879, when she was twenty-one, she married Dr. Pankhurst, who was many years older than herself. He had already formed the first Women's Suffrage Committee at Manchester, and in 1889 husband and wife helped to start the Women's Franchise League. Their two little daughters, Christabel and Sylvia, seven and nine years old, tried to help, addressing envelopes in their childish handwriting, and giving out leaflets during a three days' conference which was held in their home. They had a little manuscript magazine of their own too, in which they wrote about the meetings to which they accompanied their mother.

In 1894 Dr. and Mrs. Pankhurst joined the Women's Liberal Federation, but, dissatisfied with results, soon transferred themselves to the Independent Labour Party, of which Keir Hardie was the chairman, as it admitted men and women to membership on equal terms. After Dr. Pankhurst's death in 1898, Mrs. Pankhurst, left with three girls and a boy to bring up on a limited income, was obliged to find remunerative work, and obtained a position as registrar of births and marriages, which left her leisure for little more than her seat on the Manchester School Board. But

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Christabel's interest in the women's movement was growing; in 1901 she was elected on the Manchester Women's Suffrage Committee, and took up Suffrage propaganda among the women textile workers, speaking to any Trade Unions she could induce to receive her. Christabel's enthusiasm kindled her mother afresh, and they both felt that women could no longer go on so patiently, and something more must be done. They decided to form the Women's Social and Political Union, which later developed into the Militant Suffrage Society. They began in a very small way, the Union consisting of Christabel, the brains of the movement, Mrs. Pankhurst with her flaming energy, her silver tongue and her boundless self-devotion, her two other daughters, Sylvia and Adela, Miss Theresa Billington, a teacher who at Mrs. Pankhurst's request had been appointed organizer to the I.L.P., and twenty working women who broke away from the Labour Party to devote themselves to the Cause. They were soon joined by Annie Kenney, a mill girl, whose grasp of essentials, singleness of purpose and utter fearlessness soon made her of immense service to the Cause, particularly as these qualities were accompanied by a whole-souled devotion to Christabel, whom she regarded as an oracle, and followed with unquestioning loyalty. The W.S.P.U., whose members became known as Suffragettes to distinguish them from Mrs. Fawcett's followers, the Suffragists, began work in Manchester, where the Pankhursts lived, and the earliest expenses came out of Mrs. Pankhurst's pocket. Christabel devised and directed the whole policy of the Union, which was under strict discipline; not a penny was spent that could be saved, and the members allowed themselves no plays, no concerts and no smoking. At first they merely asked Parliamentary speakers at public

meetings when the Government would give women the vote. For nine years they worked to breaking point with their propaganda, and for the first five, although they endured much rough handling, they did not retaliate. Their object was to show that women were no longer prepared to wait patiently, and it was not long before their doings began to cause a sensation.

Meantime, in October, 1905, there came a crisis. At a great revival meeting of the Liberal Party in Manchester, Annie Kenney, standing on a chair, waved a small white banner with "Votes for Women" written upon it, and asked Sir Edward Grey: "Will the Liberal Government give women the vote?" No notice was taken, but when she shouted out the question again disorder ensued. She was joined by Christabel, and the stewards tried to dislodge them by force. Annie's hands were bruised and scratched, but still she waved her banner and cried: "The question, the question, answer the question." Finally the stewards and police succeeded in forcing them away, and pushed them out into the street. It was curious that this struggle which inaugurated militancy should take place in a hall where a picture was prominently displayed that commemorated the noble action of the Female Reformers of Manchester who had demanded the vote *for men* eighty-six years before. On the morning after the meeting Annie and Christabel, who was accused of assaulting the police, were brought up for trial and fined 5s. and 10s. or three and seven days' imprisonment; both refused to pay and were taken to the cells. This arrest created immense excitement in Manchester, where Dr. Pankhurst had been a well-known figure. Keir Hardie wired: "The thing is a dastardly outrage, but do not worry, it will do immense good to the Cause," and offered to help. Winston Churchill, who was prospective candidate for

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Manchester, offered to pay the fines, but the Governor of the prison refused to take the money. A week later a crowded meeting welcomed the return of the first prisoners of the Cause to the hall out of which they had been flung, and Annie, who had lost her work at the mill, was assured by Mrs. Pankhurst: "As long as I have a home you shall share it." A very valuable recruit at this meeting was Mrs. Drummond, the manager of the Manchester branch of the Oliver Typewriter Company. A few days afterwards the first Women's Suffrage Society celebrated its fortieth anniversary. During those forty years Mrs. Fawcett had herself founded twenty-six Suffrage Societies, and worked with untiring devotion, spreading propaganda, attending every great public meeting and every by-election, and each session approaching every Minister, and every Member of Parliament who had a place in the ballot and was able to bring forward a Bill. Was it to be wondered at that the hearts of the Pankhursts burned within them, and that figuratively they girded up their loins?

In 1906 Balfour resigned, and the King called upon Campbell Bannerman to form a Government. There was a great Liberal demonstration at the Albert Hall at which the Suffragettes determined to be present. They obtained three tickets with great difficulty. Annie Kenney sent an express messenger to Sir Henry asking if the new Government would give women the vote, and stating that if the question were not answered at the meeting she would be obliged to protest. No notice was taken, and in the middle of the meeting Annie rose from her seat in a central box and calling out: "Will the Liberal Government give women the vote," unfurled a white banner with "Votes for Women" on it; at the same moment Theresa Billington let down from the



orchestra a nine foot banner on which was "Will the Liberal Government give women the vote"; there was an uproar and the women were flung out.

The general election which followed was marked by the founding of the Labour Party by Keir Hardie, who came forward as the first Labour Member and definitely pledged to uphold the women's Cause. The Suffragists now decided to adopt a Party attitude and support all Labour candidates. This new policy was called the Election Fighting Policy and when it was brought forward at a big meeting a large sum was subscribed on the spot. Nineteen new federations were another result.

Winston Churchill's candidature at Manchester suffered incessant interruption from the Suffragettes; he would allude to the unsatisfactory policy of the late Government which ignored the people. "Now you have got your chance," he would say. "Yes, we have got our chance and we mean to use it. Will the Liberal Government give women the vote," and a woman would appear waving a white banner. Great confusion always ensued, and Winston would stoutly declare that nothing would induce him to give women the vote.

Throughout the election the Suffragettes pursued this policy, but without result, and they decided it would be best to have an organizer in London able to give her whole time to the work. Christabel was occupied with her Law studies—she took her LL.B. degree with honours—and Sylvia with her painting. Annie must go, but funds were lacking; they tried to raise money by singing carols and raffling one of Sylvia's pictures, and at length raised £2 with which Annie set off to London. Mrs. Pankhurst followed a fortnight later, and Mrs. Drummond joined them, having collected the money for her fare from friends, and borrowed a type-



DAME MILLICENT FAWCETT, D.B.E.

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writer from the Oliver Company. Keir Hardie advised them to take the Caxton Hall and advertise a big meeting, and put them in touch with a wealthy sympathizer. W. T. Stead gave them £25. They distributed handbills and canvassed from house to house. On the day Parliament opened they marched with 350 other women, carrying home-made banners, from St. James's Park station to the Caxton Hall, where they had a crowded meeting, at the close of which Mrs. Pankhurst suggested they should form in procession again, and go to the House, and they set off in torrents of rain, but it was fruitless.

The W.S.P.U. were tremendously encouraged by receiving the support of Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, whose practical sympathy and gifts for finance and organization were of inestimable value to the Cause, and whose flat at 4 Clement's Inn became the centre of action. A committee was formed and a deputation sent to Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman. As they were not admitted the women sat down on the doorstep and displayed their banner; they had notified some of the newspapers and were soon surrounded by Press photographers and a large crowd. They made a similar attempt a day or two later, and finally Sir Henry consented to receive a joint deputation. A great procession accompanied the eight speakers, each of whom represented a large organization of women: Mrs. Mary Bateson, 1,530 women graduates; Mrs. Watson, 52,000 members of the British Women's Temperance Society; Mrs. Gasson, 22,000 members of the Women's Co-operative Guild, and so on. Miss Emily Davies and Mrs. Pankhurst also urged their claims. Sir Henry listened to all they had to say, and then said kindly: "I have only one thing to preach to you, and that is the virtue of patience"; but he was cut short by Annie Kenney:



"Sir, we are not satisfied and the agitation will go on." Willie Redmond had shortly before declared in the House in support of a Resolution introduced by Keir Hardie: "Any of God's creatures who are denied a voice in the government of their country are more or less slaves. Men have no right to assume they are so superior to women that they alone have the right to govern."

Thirty women marched to Asquith's house and were roughly handled by the police, and a number of them, including Annie Kenney, were arrested. They were charged with assault and sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment. It did not break their spirit. Annie wrote: "I am very happy and I shall keep up and be brave and true, and when I come out I shall be fully prepared to do anything the Union asks of me."

Prison was a frequent experience with the Suffragettes; every attempt to reach the Prime Minister or any of the Cabinet Ministers ended in arrests; the women were roughly handled; they had to submit to all the indignities of the lowest drunk and disorderly, forced to change into prison clothes in the public dressing-room, locked into narrow cells with stone floors and insufficient ventilation, unbearably hot in summer, damply cold in winter, and at any signs of protest were placed in solitary confinement and not allowed out for the hour of exercise in the prison yard. Sometimes their hands were handcuffed behind them for twenty-four hours, and only loosed for meals; sometimes they were strapped into leather jackets which were usually worn by the lowest dregs of humanity, and later on fresh horrors were added to their trials, but they never shirked the ordeal. By 1910 Mrs. Pankhurst had been imprisoned fourteen times for varying periods, and before the end of the campaign a thousand women had



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suffered imprisonment, many of them frequently. They went to prison "for a cause they held dear"; they regarded it "not as a sacrifice but as an honour," and "the stories," one said, "that I have heard in the prison hospital have reached to the bottom of my heart. I have come out with the firm resolve to work on."

When Parliament reassembled in the autumn of 1906 and no hopes were held out by the Prime Minister, the women determined to hold a protest meeting in the Central Lobby; they mounted the seats, waved flags and tried to speak. In the struggle which followed they were thrown on the ground and roughly handled; Annie Kenney, who had been told to keep out of it because of her recent arrest, ran forward to help, and others who joined in, protesting, were with the original offenders taken into custody. Mrs. Cobden Sanderson at the trial next morning wanted to take the whole responsibility on her own shoulders, but the verdict was six months or a £10 fine for each, and Sylvia, protesting at the injustice of the trial, was also committed to prison. They were placed in the police cells, where Mrs. Pethick Lawrence read Browning to them until they were taken off in a Black Maria to Holloway. This drastic treatment moved Mrs. Fawcett, who was not in favour of militancy, to send out a circular letter in which she generously declared that the "Cause for which she and her followers had patiently laboured has received great impetus from the courage and self-sacrifice of women now in gaol, and the action of the prisoners has touched the imagination of the country in a manner which quieter methods did not succeed in doing." She also arranged a banquet to welcome them on their release, which was eagerly attended and a brilliant success. There was a great revival of interest in the Cause; the older Suffragist societies, as well as the

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Suffragettes, were worked off their feet; letters of sympathy came by every post, and money rolled in. Mrs. Fawcett tells of an M.P. who expressed his disapproval of their action to his gardener, and was met by the sturdy reply: "They've rose the country, sir." Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence took advantage of the popular feeling to start a £20,000 campaign at Exeter Hall, raising £1,400 on the spot, and also to found a monthly paper called *Votes for Women*, which was sold everywhere by the Suffragettes, who advertised it by parading the streets with sandwich-boards, riding on horseback with banners through Piccadilly, and driving buses and carriages covered with posters. The popularity of the paper rapidly increased; it soon appeared in weekly issues, and the sale rose to 50,000.

On February 1st Mrs. Fawcett organized a procession of Suffragists half a mile long, which marched in the rain to Exeter Hall through such mud that it was ever afterwards known as the "Mud March." Zangwill, speaking at Exeter Hall, said: "They are unwomanly—and therein consists the martyrdom of the pioneer . . . they have to be unwomanly in order to promote the cause of womanhood. They have to do the dirty work. . . . Are these tactics sound? In my opinion absolutely so. . . . They are the only legitimate way in which women can bring direct political pressure upon the Government. . . . For fifty years now woman has stood crying: 'I stand for justice—answer, shall I have it?' To-day she cries: 'I fight for justice and I answer that I shall have it.'"

As the King's speech in February made no mention of a woman's vote the Suffragettes held a meeting at Caxton Hall and passed a Resolution, which it was decided a deputation should take to the Prime Minister; hundreds of women volunteered, and Mrs. Despard, a

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veteran of the Social Democrat Party, was chosen to lead them. The procession was dispersed by the police, formed again and was dispersed by the mounted police, formed again, and yet again. Fifteen of the women succeeded by a strategy in making their way into the Strangers' Lobby, where they attempted to hold a meeting, and one woman actually reached the first set of swing doors; they were slammed against her with such force that she was thrown down and carried away stunned. Finally, sixty-five women and two men, all of them bruised and dishevelled, were taken to the police station. When their term of imprisonment was over they were met by a procession with a band playing. Another attempt to reach the Prime Minister was made within a few weeks; it was led by Lady Harberton and included a number of delegates from the provinces, some of them Lancashire operatives wearing shawls and clogs and headed by Annie Kenney. Blocked by the police they tried hour after hour to carry out their purpose, but in spite of strategies, were prevented from approaching the House. Lady Harberton at last got through, but her petition was ignored. A number of arrests were made.

The Women's Freedom League was now formed by Mrs. Despard, Mrs. Billington Greig and Mrs. How Martyn, and was most helpful.

The Suffragettes were exceedingly active at all by-elections; they travelled from one end of the country to the other, and opposed every candidate who was not willing to support their Cause. Immediately on arrival at any place they would set about chalking the pavements and barn-doors with announcements of their meetings, canvassing from door to door, and, ringing a bell to call attention to their presence, would harangue the crowd on every possible occasion. As a rule they

were kindly received, particularly in the north, but had to put up with a good deal from the roughs. On one occasion Mary Gawthorpe was struck on the head by a stone and was carried away unconscious, but next day she turned up again and became the heroine of the election. There were seven by-elections during 1907, and at every one the Suffragettes worked hard to get people to vote against the Government. At Jarrow there was great enthusiasm; a Labour man won, and the Liberal vote was reduced by more than a half. At Colne Valley the successful candidate admitted that his return was largely due to the Suffragettes. A provincial paper, which called them the "Suffragette Ironsides," declared: "Their staying power, judging them by the standards of men, is extraordinary . . . each of these women, as often as not, tackles an audience alone." The Suffragette forces rapidly increased; instead of one or two there were now thirty regular by-election campaigners; sixteen to twenty meetings were held every day during each contest; collections were taken, and for the big meetings admission was charged.

Mrs. Pankhurst had one of the worst experiences; it was in January, 1908, at a mid-Devon election where Lewis Harcourt was contesting the seat. At one of the meetings the women interfered so effectively that it was broken up and the audience went off to listen to Mrs. Pankhurst. Her victory was temporary; the roughs intervened and pelted the women with showers of rotten eggs and other missiles; they were forced to take refuge in a friend's house; it was surrounded by the mob, who broke the windows. The women tried to escape at the back, but were caught by the roughs, who seized Mrs. Pankhurst by the throat, beat her about the head and stunned her. The police came up and she was taken away in a car, but for a considerable





ARRESTED SUFFRAGETTE PASSING OVER BRIDGE IN  
ST. JAMES'S PARK



SUFFRAGETTE ARRESTED OUTSIDE BUCKINGHAM PALACE





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time afterwards she was unable to walk. It is a horrible experience : to be at the mercy of a mob whose worst instincts are let loose. As a result of the outrages one man was fined five shillings.

At an election at Peckham the Government lost by a majority of 2,494, Mrs. Drummond was carried shoulder high down the street, and Mr. Gooch, the successful candidate, owned that "a great feature of this election has been the activity of the supporters of Women's Suffrage." St. John Irvine wrote in the *Nation* : "This Peckham election has been a revelation to me of the perfectly wonderful forces which the W.S.P.U. are bringing to bear on by-elections," and Winston Churchill admitted in April, 1908 : "They have now got behind them a great popular demand amongst women. It is no longer a movement of a few extravagant and excitable people, but one which is gradually spreading to all classes of women, and that being so it assumes the same character as franchise movements have previously assumed." But when he was defeated by Joynson Hicks and had to put up again elsewhere he called the Suffragettes "hornets," and said he had "seen with regret some of the most earnest advocates of the Cause, allying themselves with the forces of drink and reaction carried shoulder high—so he was informed—by the rowdy elements which are always to be found at the tail of a public house agitation." A young member of the Women's Freedom League, who was known as "la belle Maloney," resented these remarks, and hoping to force him to apologize, interrupted a number of his outdoor meetings with a large muffin bell.

The Women's Federation now declared that unless Woman's Suffrage was granted before the dissolution of Parliament they would refuse to work for the Liberal

Party any longer at Parliamentary elections. This alarmed the Liberals, who sent a deputation to Asquith, and he agreed to their moving an amendment to the Government's Reform Bill if it was definitely supported by the women of the country. The Liberal women, deceived by this concession, were deeply grateful, but later, when Asquith was questioned in the House, he answered simply: "My honourable friend has asked me a question contingent on a remote and speculative future."

The W.S.P.U. determined to hold a great demonstration in Hyde Park. For days beforehand immense posters with portraits of the twenty women who were to preside on twenty platforms, a map of the route, women with sandwich boards, and chalked announcements met the eye at every turn, and into every hand bills were thrust. On the Thursday before, Mrs. Drummond, accompanied by twelve women, set off in a steam launch decorated with banners, and a band playing, for the House of Commons, arriving at a time when the Members were out on the terrace. They crowded round Mrs. Drummond, who invited them all to be present at the demonstration; the police appeared and she steamed away.

The Sunday of the demonstration, June 21st, 1908, was a beautiful day; thirty special trains came from seventy towns; the processions started between one and two, the women in white dresses and wearing the Suffragette colours, purple and green and white. One procession of 13,000 Suffragists, organized by the N.U.W.S.S., carried gorgeous banners of silk and velvet, the work of the Artists' League, portraying the great women champions of the world, Joan of Arc, Boadicea, Elizabeth Fry, etc., and was led by Emily Davies, Dr. Garrett Anderson and Mrs. Fawcett.

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The processions entered by seven gates, and each was accompanied by mounted police, 6,000 in all; perfect order reigned. There were women of every class and from all parts of the world: Australians, Americans, Hungarians, Russians, South Africans; professional women, undergraduates in great force, writers, artists, actresses, nurses, gardeners; members of the Freedom League, the Co-operative Guild, the I.L.P., the Fabian Society, all were there. The Chelsea procession consisted of 7,000. Immense crowds surrounded the twenty platforms. At five o'clock a bugle sounded and a Resolution was passed, calling upon the Government to give votes to women; the bugle sounded again and the vast multitudes raised the cry "Votes for Women" again and again and yet again. It was a triumph of organization on the part of the Pethick Lawrences and Mrs. Drummond, who had earned the name of the "General." Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, who had devised the pageantry, was warmly congratulated. It was the largest gathering ever witnessed in Hyde Park; but the Government were not impressed and Asquith refused to receive any deputations.

Lady Constance Lytton, meeting Mrs. Pethick Lawrence and Annie Kenney at a holiday home for club girls, and hearing the story of their prison experiences, was roused to indignation, and attacked Sir Evelyn John on the subject, thus helping to bring about the International Prisons Commission of which he became chairman. This was at a time when the W.S.P.U., having spent five years without achieving their object, felt they must use more drastic measures. They announced a fifth deputation to the House of Commons for October 13th, 1908, advertising their intentions in a handbill which invited the general

public to help the Suffragettes "rush the House of Commons." It brought the police down upon them; Mrs. Pankhurst, Christabel and Mrs. Drummond were served with a warrant and told to report themselves at Bow Street on the following morning. Lady Constance Lytton, anxious to help, went off to try and get Herbert Gladstone, the Home Secretary, to promise that they should be treated as the political offenders which they were, and not as common criminals, but the only answer she received was: "The Home Secretary cannot interfere before they are sentenced, and never interferes with the jurisdiction of the police courts." Meantime a deputation under Miss Wallace Dunlop began a hopeless fight to get through Parliament Square, which was filled with police; Mrs. Leigh, at the head of a second party, dashed forward and seized a police horse with either hand, but was flung to the ground; one party succeeded by strategy in getting quite close through an underground passage, and one woman actually succeeded in getting into the Chamber, where she shouted: "Attend to the women's question," before she was seized and carried out.

The next day Mrs. Pankhurst, Christabel and Mrs. Drummond were brought up for trial, but Christabel, urging that the case should be tried by a judge and jury it was adjourned for a week, which gave them the time they needed to prepare a telling defence that would advertise the Cause. The trial, when it came on, lasted nine hours; Christabel and her mother delivered brilliant speeches, explaining the meaning of the movement and the aims of the women; Christabel called a large number of witnesses, including Herbert Gladstone and Lloyd George, and proved that the crowd had been orderly and no violence was done. Mrs. Pankhurst's eloquent words on this occasion finally decided Lady



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Constance to join the W.S.P.U. Her admiration for mother and daughter was unbounded. When she found they were committed to prison and were there treated as criminals she got up a petition to the King, signed by Dr. Garrett Anderson, Beatrice Harraden, Madame Melba, Ellen Terry, Lady Butler, Mrs. Sidney Webb and many others, asking that they should be treated as political offenders. A procession, a breakfast and an enthusiastic meeting at the Queen's Hall as usual celebrated their release.

The next important move of the Suffragettes was in January, 1909, when they presented themselves in Downing Street while a Cabinet meeting was in progress, and chaining themselves to the railings to express their political bondage and prevent their being dragged away, began to speak. While the police were vainly engaged in trying to break the chains a taxi drew up on the opposite side of the road, Mrs. Drummond jumped out and before she could be prevented had seized the brass knob, which she had discovered on a previous occasion opened the door, entered the house and had nearly reached the council chamber before she was flung out and hurled down the steps. They were all arrested.

When the King opened Parliament four women rushed in and tried to present a petition. The Women's Freedom League sent two deputations to four Cabinet Ministers, and Asquith received a deputation from the N.U.W.S.S., to whom he said definitely that the Government would not introduce a Vote for Women measure themselves, and would not allow the passage of a private member's Bill. Next day nine women from the Freedom League who were refused admission to Asquith's house, covered the area railings with their posters and harangued the crowd from the doorstep.

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More arrests. The question whether the Suffragettes should be treated as political offenders came up in the House, Earl Russell commenting dryly: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church."

On February 11th, 1909, the Women's Parliament, as it was called, passed a Resolution and arranged for it to be delivered to the Prime Minister. The police, expecting the arrival of the women, assembled round the House in solid masses. At four o'clock two furniture removal vans came slowly from Victoria Street, the first went past the House, on the back ledge of the second a boy lay, apparently half asleep, a little man was sauntering by; as the second van arrived at the Strangers' entrance the man dropped a handkerchief, the boy sprang off, the doors of the van flew open, twenty-one women plunged out and made a rush for the House; blinded by the long ride in the darkness some ran the wrong way, others headed straight, two managed to get inside before they were flung out. Arrests followed. Meanwhile a procession came silently from Caxton Hall, at Broad Sanctuary police blocked the way; the women, accompanied by the crowd, pressed forward again and again; eventually fifty were arrested, among them two Chelsea portrait painters, two of Sir Henry Brackenbury's nieces, and a niece of Joachim's.

Mrs. Pankhurst, arriving next day from a successful campaign in Yorkshire, though still lame, declared she must make another effort, and with Annie Kenney and eleven others, went first in single file, then in twos and threes, and after a considerable struggle pushed through into Victoria Street, and were there arrested.

The work went on, and in spite of all precautions the women were ubiquitous. On one occasion a well-known Liberal hostess was holding a reception in honour of

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the Prime Minister, and one of the guests, as she shook hands with him, murmured: "Can I do anything to persuade you to give votes to women" and began to read some clauses of Magna Charta; the hostess, becoming aware of what was happening, blew a police whistle and the lady was conducted from the house.

The Women's Freedom League organized a demonstration from the Ladies' Gallery of the House during the discussion on the Licensing Bill: three women quietly attached themselves to the grille with padlocks and chains and shouted out "Votes for Women." To dislodge them it was found necessary to remove the part of the grille to which they were attached to a Committee Room, until a locksmith could be procured. Meantime Mrs. Pankhurst, Mrs. Drummond and some other women attempted to hold a meeting in the Lobby, clambering up on to the pedestal of the statue of Richard I to distract the attention of the police while the other Suffragettes made a dash to enter the House. Fourteen were taken into custody.

When they arrived at Holloway Mrs. Pankhurst announced that they would no longer submit to the degrading prison regulations; they would not allow themselves to be searched nor change their clothes in the public dressing-room, nor would they refrain from talking to each other. She was treated as a dangerous criminal and placed in solitary confinement, and not allowed to leave her cell for daily exercise and chapel. Miss Wallace Dunlop also mutinied, angry at treatment to which Mrs. Leigh was subjected, and made the other Suffragettes link arms and stand with their backs to the wall, refusing to return to their cells. Mrs. Drummond fell ill and was released by order of Herbert Gladstone, the Home Secretary. She took advantage of her freedom to bring a party of Suffragettes

and march in procession with them three times round the prison singing the Marseillaise. They tried this again a week later but were stopped by the police. When the women were at length released they were taken away from the prison in a carriage drawn by white horses, on which girls sat as outriders, and were welcomed at the Queen's Hall by a crowded meeting of Suffragettes dressed in white and wearing their colours. Annie unfurled a great silk banner with the inscription : " The Women of this Union are the happiest people in the world. They have the glorious pride of being made an instrument of those great forces that are working towards progress and Liberty."

At a Liberal meeting at the Albert Hall while Lloyd George was speaking, the women in the front row of the arena, suddenly removing their cloaks, appeared in prison garb: the hall rose in uproar, the women shouted: " Why don't you do something," and " Deeds not words," and waved a white banner with the words " Be honest."

The devices of the Suffragettes were many and ingenious; Christabel was always thinking of something new that would provide the Press with sensation and keep them before the public. The Postmaster-General happened to issue some new regulations, of which Christabel instantly took advantage. From the Strand post office she posted " human letters " by express to the Prime Minister, in the persons of two Suffragettes and a messenger boy. One Suffragette carried a placard with " Votes for Women " and the other the address. They were refused admittance at Downing Street under the plea that they were dead letters and could not be signed for. A facsimile of " Black Maria " drove through the streets, women in prison dress emerged, distributed handbills and chalked the





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pavements with announcements of another deputation to the Prime Minister. A Suffragette in a dirigible balloon floated over the House, dropping handbills with "Votes for Women." A Suffragette discovered the existence of an old law that gave permission to outlaws to find sanctuary with the Head of the Church. Annie accordingly packed a suitcase and presented herself at the Archbishop's palace for a long stay; her presence created a certain amount of embarrassment as no one knew how to deal with the situation, and argument failed to move her; finally the police had to be called in.

The seventh and eighth Women's Parliaments were held and sent out incessant deputations which always ended in arrests. Since the grille incident the House sat in secret, excluding all visitors for six months. Then a Brawling Bill with heavy penalties was brought forward, but it disappeared after Keir Hardie's caustic comment that it would not have been necessary if certain members of the Government had redeemed their election pledges. On one occasion the women managed to get in and chained themselves to the statues of men who had upheld the liberties of the people, and had to be detached with strong pincers. After this for a long time no women were admitted unless they were related to an M.P. who had won a place in the ballot.

The women had a Self-Denial Week, sold flowers, swept crossings, took round barrel organs, chalked pictures on the pavement and paraded the streets with collection boxes: among the latter were May Sinclair, Evelyn Sharpe and Violet Hunt; the poorer members gave up sugar and milk and worked in their scanty leisure. In these ways £8,000 was collected. They had a "Votes for Women" exhibition at Princes' Skating Rink, of which a striking feature was Sylvia Pankhurst's decorative painting "They that sow in

tears shall reap in joy ”; a women’s drum and fife band played, and various entertainments advertising the Cause were given. Friends from many parts of the world came in crowds, and £5,500 was added to the funds.

Miss Wallace Dunlop, having discovered that a Bill of Rights passed in the time of William and Mary, and still in force, stated that “ It is the right of the subject to petition the King, and all commitments and prosecutions for such petitioning are illegal,” went with a Member to the House, and getting into St. Stephen’s Hall quickly unwrapped a printer’s block which bore these words and the announcement of a women’s deputation for June 29th, and pressed it against the wall; when she was dragged away this remained for all to see. She made a similar attempt two days later and was arrested and imprisoned. Keir Hardie asked the Home Secretary to give orders that the deputation should be admitted but he refused. A Suffragette arrived on horseback with a letter to announce its arrival; the letter was not accepted. Mrs. Pankhurst led the deputation, followed by two little old women well over seventy, and six others; the police lines opened and they went through, but were met by the statement that the Prime Minister regretted he was unable to receive them. Mrs. Pankhurst refused to go away, saying she stood upon her right as a subject of the King to petition the Prime Minister, but at length, fearful for the safety of the old women, she committed a technical assault by striking the inspector twice lightly on the cheek, and with her companions was placed under arrest. A woman waving a flag gave the signal for a general attempt to struggle through the Square, which was held by a large force of mounted police who drove them back, but no sooner was one

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group dispersed than six or seven women would appear in another direction; the night before they had hired thirty different rooms in the Square, from which they made rushes for the House. Other Suffragettes wrapped petitions round small stones with which they broke the windows of the First Lord of the Admiralty, the Home Office, the Privy Council and the Treasury Offices. One hundred and eight women were taken into custody. The *Scotsman*, reporting the affair, said it was the most successful attempt the militant section of the Party had made. "However much one may deplore their methods one cannot overlook their earnestness; they are out to win."

Meanwhile, in prison Miss Wallace Dunlop claimed to be treated as a political offender, and as her claim was ignored she inaugurated the hunger strike which was to cause the women terrible suffering but proved a most effective weapon for the Cause. As her determination was obstinate and it was impossible to deal with her growing weakness she was released. Fourteen other women followed her example, and refused to deliver up their private property or to undress, in spite of the wardresses; they also broke panes of glass in their cells to get air, and were sentenced to solitary confinement, but eventually had to be released, and though weak from the terrible strain, returned for the most part at once to the campaign.

Nothing daunted the Suffragettes, they persistently attended every important public meeting, often suffering the roughest usage, their clothes torn, their hats lost, their hair pulled down. One girl climbed on to the roof of St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow, and lay there for hours in a downpour of rain, merely that she might send her voice through a skylight at a meeting; when she was forced to descend the crowd cheered her for her

pluck, and rescued the other women who were trying to force their way in, again and again from the police.

On another occasion a Suffragette in gym dress climbed up a high scaffolding on the Bank of Scotland and let herself down twenty-five feet in the dark on to the roof of Kinnaird Hall, where she lay concealed for seventeen hours before the meeting began; then attaching the rope to the roof by an iron hook, she let herself down through a skylight on to the stairs and rushed into the meeting, but before she could utter a word she was seized by the stewards and flung out; other Suffragettes led a great charge on the hall but all were arrested.

Before a great meeting at Birmingham which was to be addressed by the Prime Minister, Mrs. Leigh everywhere chalked warnings to the public not to attend, and there was great excitement. Every precaution was taken by the police; a great tarpaulin was stretched across the glass roof, with a fire escape on each side with the hose adjusted; wooden barriers nine feet high were erected across the platform and all the chief thoroughfares, and the streets in front and at the back of the hall were guarded. Asquith was surrounded by detectives and police, smuggled to his hotel by a subway and taken up to his room in the luggage lift; he entered the hall by an emergency exit. Every ticket-holder was carefully scrutinized. But all precautions were in vain; the Suffragettes had been lodging for days in houses within the barriers, and carrying on a propaganda campaign; missiles were thrown through the ventilators; a woman's voice was heard through a megaphone from the house opposite; from another house came the sound of a horn. Mrs. Leigh and another Suffragette got out on to the roof of a neighbouring house, tore off the slates with axes,



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and with warning shouts flung them down into the streets. The police turned a hose on them, threw bricks, and finally managed to mount to the roof where, amidst the hooting of the crowd, they seized the drenched Suffragettes. As the train left the station carrying away the Prime Minister, showers of stones rattled against the windows and an iron bar was hurled into an empty compartment adjoining. It is noteworthy that even in their most violent struggles the women carefully avoided injury to other people.

The Suffragettes followed Ministers on holiday, to their homes and country resorts. Two girls caught Asquith when he was golfing and expressed their views pretty plainly; another time they caught Gladstone and Asquith and there was a tussle in which the girls were knocked down by two men who joined in.

A party of Suffragettes appeared in the church at Clovelly when Asquith was in residence and occupying his pew; he tried to slip away but they pursued him and threatened to force him to listen. They renewed the attack next day, hiding among bushes and trees, climbing cliffs and scrambling over rocks to get at him. In order to put the detectives with whom he was surrounded off the scent, they packed their bags, and as if departing, drove off to Bideford. They walked back the twelve miles, and, arriving at Clovelly Court at two in the morning, they decorated every bush in front of the house with Suffragette placards and "Votes for Women." Once when he was at Lympne a nurse and two quiet-looking students arrived in the village. By much climbing, crawling and scrambling up the cliff these disguised Suffragettes managed to reach the castle when the family were at dinner; they threw gravel at the windows and shouted: "When are you going to give us the vote," and

before anyone could reach them they had scrambled down again and gone off in a boat.

One plan of the women was to secure tickets for meetings, sometimes as many as fifty, and they would rise in a body at Liberal catchwords: "Liberty for Women, please."

Once Birrell was billed to speak at a meeting at the Colston Hall; on the previous evening there was a concert at which two Suffragettes were present; they managed to elude the stewards and got into the organ, which was being repaired and had a scaffolding inside; on this they slept by turns, and breakfasted on a bar of chocolate and an apple. The meeting was proceeding peaceably when a shrill voice issued from the organ: "Votes for Women. Give women their political freedom. Why don't you give women liberty?" It was some time before the voice could be located, and only after strenuous efforts and much disturbance could the women be ejected. They got into the organ again on another occasion, and ladders had to be fetched before they could be got out; the attention of the audience was distracted and the meeting had to be abandoned.

Another time when Birrell was speaking at Manchester and the roofs had been carefully searched beforehand for Suffragettes, their voices were heard issuing from an American cake-walk show which adjoined the hall. To elude capture they ascended the cake-walking machine, where, to the immense amusement of the crowd, the police tried to follow them.

The result of these and similar happenings all over the country was that the prisons were filled with Suffragettes; they mutinied, were condemned to solitary confinement and went on hunger strike. At first they were let out after four or five days' starvation,

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## THE FIGHT FOR THE FRANCHISE

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but in the summer of 1909 the Home Secretary ordered that they should be forcibly fed. The experiences of Lady Constance Lytton give a vivid idea of what this meant. She was arrested as a result of joining in a demonstration outside the prison at Liverpool, in which a number of Suffragettes were confined. She incited the crowd to make for the Governor's house and refuse to leave unless he would release the prisoners. Her first action when she was imprisoned was to smash her window. She starved for four days and then was forcibly fed. The doctor and four wardresses came into her cell and made her lie down on her bed; her feet and hands were held by the wardresses, and the doctor put a steel gag into her mouth, forcing it open until it was yawning wide; then he thrust a large rubber tube down her throat until she was on the verge of suffocation; finally the food was poured down and the tube was not removed until the vomiting had become excessive. She wrote on the walls of her cell: "Votes for Women; no surrender until they are won," and "Under a Government which imprisons any unjustly the true place for a just man or woman is also a prison," and, facing her bed: "Be ye strong and very courageous." After the third attempt to feed her forcibly the doctor urged: "I appeal to you not as a prison doctor but as a man to give over. You are a delicate woman. You are not fit for this sort of thing. How could your Union send you?" She assured him her action had been entirely voluntary, and the leaders did not know what she had intended to do. She was forcibly fed eight times before her release. "It was all a nightmare," she wrote, "but oh, the joy that I really do believe I have done some good."

In January, 1910, although still suffering from the effects of her imprisonment, she spoke at a meeting at

the Queen's Hall, and told the audience that thirty-five other women had been treated in the same way. What they wanted, she declared, was a fair hearing, and it was only when driven to the last extremity that like men they had to recourse to violence, but as they had resolved while other weapons were left to them not to do any harm, they chose the weapon of self-hurt. Lady Constance felt very keenly that the political disability of women injuriously affected the root and fibre of national life. No woman of reasonable intelligence, she said, could pass a month in Holloway prison and not realize that the human wreckage there was not only the result of human frailty but of a state of Law and public opinion from which the representation of the woman's point of view was almost entirely absent, and it was therefore injurious and unjust to the whole community. The truth of this and the urgent need for redress burned in the hearts and minds of all the women who clamoured for the Vote. Lady Constance herself gave the whole of a legacy and sold all her personal possessions for the Suffrage Cause. Forcible feeding roused a storm of protests; the *Lancet* stated that it produced laceration of the throat, occasioned permanent injury to the digestion and caused an excessive strain on the heart and nerves, and 116 doctors signed a protest to Asquith.

In December, 1909, Asquith declared that if he were returned to power and was able to bring in a Reform Bill, a Women's Suffrage amendment might be added to it if the House wished. Sir Edward Grey and Winston Churchill spoke in favour of Women's Suffrage during the election, and 245 candidates included it in their election addresses. In the new Parliament a committee for Women's Suffrage was formed called the Conciliation Committee, which was made up of





A WOMAN CARTER HELPING WITH THE HAY HARVEST (1915)



THREE MEMBERS OF THE WOMEN'S LAND ARMY (1916)





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Liberals, Conservatives, Nationalists and Labour Members, and drew up a Bill called the Conciliation Bill to enfranchise the women householders who numbered rather over a million. The Bill was introduced by Mr. Shackleton, a Labour Member, and with its introduction in January, 1910, the Militants entered upon a truce.

On June 18th, 1910, the W.S.P.U. organized a great demonstration in favour of the Bill. A procession six miles long, and taking three hours to pass a given point, marched from the Embankment to the Albert Hall. All the Suffrage Societies, a thousand women graduates, and representatives from every city, town, village and hamlet in Great Britain, and from many other parts of the world, joined in, and every imprisonment was represented. Hundreds of banners bearing inscriptions were carried and there were forty bands. £5,000 was raised on the occasion.

In July Government granted two days for the discussion of the Bill, and it passed by a majority of 110. Between July and September violent propaganda went on, and 4,000 Suffrage meetings were held; the Albert Hall was filled twice in one week. Hopes ran high until the Premier announced that before Parliament dissolved on November 18th, there would only be time for the discussion of Party reforms. The W.S.P.U. sent a deputation to the House headed by Mrs. Pankhurst and Dr. Garrett Anderson, and consisting of 300 women grimly prepared for the worst. There was a general mêlée of so violent a character that the day was afterwards known as Black Friday; many windows were broken, Asquith got bits of broken glass down his neck, women laid hold of Birrell and kicked his hat to pieces. Hundreds of women were flung about by the police, trampled on, their arms

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## BRITISH WOMEN IN TWENTIETH CENTURY

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twisted. A hundred women and four men were arrested, but, strange to say, were dismissed next morning. This was the end of the Militants' truce; it had become obvious to the women that their Cause would always be squeezed out by other political questions, unless they forced it upon the attention of their unjust judges with the importunity of the widow in the Bible.

The second Reading of the Bill in May, 1911, was carried by a large majority. Sir Edward Grey in an after dinner speech promised facilities for the Bill, and Asquith stated: "I have no hesitation in saying that the promise made by and on behalf of the Government in regard to giving facilities for the Conciliation Bill will be strictly adhered to both in the letter and the spirit," and once more the women's hopes rose. But in November all that the Prime Minister announced was a Bill for the extension of male franchise. An angry and desperate deputation, headed by Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, tried to reach him, windows were broken and 220 women were arrested, among them Mrs. Pankhurst, who had spent the previous day in Dr. Ethel Smyth's garden practising stone throwing, Dr. Ethel Smyth herself, whose "March of the Women" was sung at all Militant meetings, and Mrs. Brackenbury, aged seventy-eight.

The Conciliation Bill was brought forward for the third time in March, 1912, and defeated by fourteen. This was the last straw. The Suffragettes were at the end of their tether; they had exhausted every peaceful device in their power and nothing remained but to resort to violence. They did not do it willingly, all the joy in the combat which had characterized the early days of the movement was at an end; henceforward grim determination alone animated them. They began by smashing the windows of shops and

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offices in the best-known streets, and in the houses of hostile individuals. This drew the attention of the police. The offices of the paper *Votes for Women* were raided, and for months anyone who printed it was arrested. A type machine had to be secretly put up in a cellar and manipulated by a faithful Suffragette. Detectives from Scotland Yard visited the Suffragette headquarters at Clement's Inn and arrested Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence; Mrs. Pankhurst was already in prison, and Christabel had disappeared. Placards everywhere announced that all the Suffragette leaders had been arrested. Dismay reigned among the Suffragettes; then a message came from Paris to Annie Kenney from Christabel. She was to go over at once, in disguise. In Paris Christabel was able to escape imprisonment, and although later an appeal was made in Parliament for her deportation the French disregarded it. Annie Kenney and Christabel talked for hours, and the faithful Annie returned, primed with instructions, to find the Movement almost collapsed. But the message from Christabel revitalized the women: "Press on and give all our loyal ones my love and my faith, and by unity we shall win through." Every week for months Annie went across to Paris, and on her return laboured incessantly to carry out all Christabel's instructions, scarcely allowing time to eat or sleep. Christabel, driven to desperation, urged a policy of extreme militancy; the Pethick Lawrences demurred; it might mean loss of life; for months they passively resisted, then they broke away; Annie Kenney, who was indebted to them for much kindness, was heart-broken, but her loyalty to Christabel never wavered. The Pethick Lawrences were a terrible loss; they had been the mainstay of the Movement, his financial ability

had raised thousands of pounds for the Cause, and her talent for pageantry had given it colour and popularity. But nothing would alter Christabel's determination; she was prepared to lead a forlorn hope. From January, 1913, the work became more and more secret, arson was the policy; there were fires everywhere; the Militants collected stores of combustibles, and armed with a piece of cotton wool, a small bottle of paraffin, a few shavings and a box of matches, a couple of girls would undertake a task that involved the greatest danger to themselves, and for which a heavy penalty would be exacted. At first they only set fire to empty houses, but later no building was safe from them; they burned down two churches and set fire to Lloyd George's house at Walton; they threw corrosive liquid into letter-boxes; they dropped bombs in the most sacred precincts; they tried to cut pictures from their frames in the National Gallery. The world rang with their exploits, and almost every day there was a fresh sensation. The Free Church in the Hampstead Garden Suburb had an extraordinary escape; they set it on fire, and the flames catching hold happened to melt a lead pipe which supplied the water for the baptistery from a cistern; this released the water and extinguished the fire.

There were hundreds of arrests and heavy sentences, but forcible feeding was no longer enforced, and women sentenced for five years would, as the result of a hunger strike, sometimes be let out on licence in five days. The Home Secretary had brought in a Bill called the Prisoners' Temporary Discharge for Ill Health Bill which the Suffragettes nicknamed the Cat and Mouse Bill. When prisoners as the result of a hunger strike were let out on licence under this Bill, they went to Mrs. Brackenbury's house, which they



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called Mouse Castle, to be nursed back to health; the police kept an incessant watch upon the house to see that no prisoner got away, but the Suffragettes were too wily for them. Annie Kenney, in particular, had many exciting adventures. Released with a licence she would leave Mouse Castle in disguise within a few minutes of entering it, and make her way to the Pavilion where the meetings were usually held. Pushing her way through the unsuspecting detectives who crowded the entrance, she would jump on the platform, and, waving her licence in the air, would auction it to the highest bidder. Once she was packed in a hamper, labelled "Marie Lloyd, Pavilion," and was carried by men grumbling about the weight and frequently dropping the hamper, to the hall. She was helped from her cramped hiding-place and managed to address the meeting before the detectives became aware of her presence, and in the scuffle that ensued she was nearly pulled to pieces. After one arrest she was brought on a stretcher in an ambulance to the meeting, but was too ill to speak. Another Suffragette, known as the "Elusive Pimpernel" when out on licence, managed to get away from Mouse Castle in a laundry basket, and on another occasion, disguised as a baker's boy. Meanwhile the Suffragists had patiently continued their propaganda. In 1912 a deputation of working women came to Lloyd George; one after the other, laundress, mill girl, fishwife, teachers, nurses, tailoresses, they told him of their wrongs and why they wanted the vote. The fishwife had come 400 miles to get it. They said the only way to stop militancy was by a Women's Suffrage Bill.

In July, 1913, 400 Suffrage Societies organized a pilgrimage from every part of England to a mass meeting in the Park, entering by eight routes.

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## BRITISH WOMEN IN TWENTIETH CENTURY

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In the spring of 1914 the Woman Householder Franchise Bill was defeated in the House of Lords by forty-four.

In May, 1914, Lord Selborne introduced a Women's Suffrage Bill into the House of Lords. Macdonald, in supporting it, said that the women's agitation had brought the franchise both for men and women to the front in the House of Commons.

The deadly seriousness of the Militants was shown by the terrible deed of self-sacrifice performed by Miss Emily Wilding Davison. She had set fire to a letter-box and had been sentenced to six months' imprisonment. Directly she was released she went unaccompanied and without having confided her intention to any living soul, to the Derby, and as the King's horse was rushing past she flung herself in front of it with her Suffrage petition clutched in her hand; the jockey was thrown but she herself never regained consciousness. Her funeral was like that of a king.

But the War broke out and every other consideration was swallowed up in the national crisis; the Militants, although they had not the remotest idea of it at the time, had struck their last blow for the Cause.

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### THE WAR AND AFTERWARDS

THE War gave women the chance to prove their capacity and they rose to the emergency with extraordinary ease. They had been yearning to prove their mettle, and instantly fitted into the breach left by the men. Like the advancing tide that almost imperceptibly covers every hollow in the sand, they filled the vacancies. No job was too hard, too difficult, too laborious or too tedious for them, and their desire to help seemed to gather momentum as the weary years went by.

Within a few hours of the declaration of war the elaborate organization of the Militants was converted to the service of the country. Their own aims were entirely shelved. "Militants," they declared, "will fight for their country as they have fought for the vote." They lent their offices for recruiting and plunged into every form of war activity. The Suffragists were even more alert; before war was officially declared the executive committee of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies decided to suspend all their political activities and devote the organizing capacity of the Union to the country's need. The London Society for Women's Suffrage became the London Society for Women's Service: a free bureau to advise women and girls in what directions their work was most needed, sorting them out for employment in the various offices needing clerks, and so forth. They helped thousands of non-professional women to find

useful work. They also devoted themselves to the relief of distress; taking care of young women who were out of work and foreigners who were stranded. They helped in opening convalescent homes; to promote infant welfare, preserve food supplies, save fruit crops, send out travelling kitchens to bottle fruit, and last, but most important of all, they helped to send abroad hospital units; out of this grew a great work. Dr. Elsie Inglis, Dr. Garrett Anderson and Dr. Flora Murray organized a splendidly equipped unit, but when Dr. Inglis offered to place it at the disposal of the R.A.M.C. she met with a rebuff: "Dear lady, go home and keep quiet." This did not deter the women; they offered themselves to the French Red Cross, and their unit developed into the Scottish Women's Hospital, which contained 1,885 beds, and for which they raised £428,905. Their work at length wrung from the army authorities the admission that they were worth their weight in diamonds.

Women throughout the country soon grasped the necessity for organized efficiency; they all worked under the orders of central authorities. The tiniest hamlet had its working party, busy upon the production of innumerable helpless case jackets, pyjamas, socks, comforters, helmets, bandages, swabs, etc., made to a regulation pattern furnished by Queen Mary's Needlework Guild. As each need came up committees were instantly formed to deal with it; class distinctions vanished, women laboured side by side intent only on getting the work done. No doubt there were some who thought it a good opportunity to slip into social circles from which they had been debarred; but taking the sex as a whole their paramount thought was to help the men who were fighting for them, by every means in their power. Many girls joined voluntary aid





NO TASK TOO HARD (1916)



POLISHING HIGH EXPLOSIVES (1916)





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detachments and worked in auxiliary hospitals; or they raised funds and made comforts for the soldiers. When the Belgian refugees arrived before the end of August, 2,500 local Belgian relief committees were formed. In every place there were committees charged with the care of the wives and families of the soldiers and sailors.

Although to many people the War came like a bolt from the blue, there had been an instinctive preparation for some years in certain quarters, notably the big schools. Cheltenham Ladies' College was perhaps the pioneer among the girls' schools; as far back as 1910 it began to train the girls to take their share in the work of national defence. Two voluntary aid detachments were formed in the college, yearly inspections were held, and by 1914 about 400 girls had gained certificates in first aid and nursing. They had also learned how to weave mattresses, do carpentry, construct outside shelters, and devise labour-saving appliances. They were instructed in invalid cookery, and could cook appetizing meals in a hole in the ground. When the War came they were ready and eager to be of service. They immediately made or collected innumerable garments, and raised large sums of money. Their delight was great when in March, 1915, the V.A.D.s were ordered to mobilize, and they were allowed to prepare an empty house as a hospital; they cleaned it all themselves, stained the floors, bought the furniture and furnished the staff. Two thousand old Cheltonians worked as hospital nurses, ambulance drivers, teachers of handicrafts, clerks, masseuses, dispensers, land workers and canteen workers. Girls of all ages gave up games and spent their leisure in gardening, knitting and sewing: making sun shields, sand bags, periscopes, pneumonia jackets, bandages, etc. Cheltenham's total output was 55,000 articles, and the other great girls'

schools were not far behind. When the pressure became greater schools which had science laboratories were enlisted by the Royal Society War Committee to help produce anæsthetics and other essentials. Girls would go into the country herb-gathering, and sell the proceeds for the hospitals. They went fruit picking, collected waste paper, sold soot, collected and sold honey. Girls at school in those war years learned many useful lessons in thrift, initiative, resource, perseverance and self-denial.

In September, 1914, the Women's Freedom League raised a volunteer corps of Women Police, which was later re-organized as the Women's Police Service; and the National Union of Women Workers organized women patrols who worked under the Commissioner of Police and chief constables. The Women's Emergency Corps shortly came into being; it was a trained and disciplined body of women who wore khaki uniform, did military drill, and were ready to act as signallers, despatch riders, telegraphists or motorists; the Women's Volunteer Reserve grew out of this corps before the end of 1914.

By the spring of 1915 the Marchioness of Londonderry had founded the Women's Legion, a corps of paid women to replace paid men; they wore khaki uniforms and were under discipline and regulations. Over 400,000 women enrolled in this legion; it formed a link between the independent voluntary associations, such as the Emergency Corps, and the official women's services. Eventually a United Services League co-ordinated and registered work done by the war clubs throughout the kingdom.

Relief work-rooms were started to help the refugees and those who were suffering from the dislocation of labour. A collection of surplus food from the London

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markets for the unemployed and Belgian refugees developed into the National Food Fund, which raised £163,615 in gifts of food and money before the end of the War.

In the spring of 1915, when the munition question became acute, the impression that the Suffragettes had made on those in power was demonstrated. It was to Mrs. Pankhurst that Lloyd George turned in the hour of the nation's great need; he explained to her the gravity of the situation and the necessity for employing hundreds of women, and with her capable help munition work for women began. The Suffragettes, mindful of the future, kept in close touch with the women, spoke continually at all the big works, and arranged for a deputation of women to visit the factories abroad. Firms at Glasgow, Erith and Barrow-in-Furness were the first to employ women in shell-making to ease the strain of Sunday work for the men. These women relief munition workers were educated women of the leisured class; they undertook the rough turning and boring of 4·5 shells and 18 lb. shrapnel. After their training they bound themselves to undertake week-end shifts for six months. When those in authority saw that these women munition workers, many of whose lives had hitherto been spent in comfortable leisure, would, at the call of duty, undertake work that was hard and monotonous in character and involved considerable strain, as it had to be accomplished in the shortest possible space of time, and amid the deafening noise that always accompanies work in a munition factory, they began to revise their opinion of a woman's capacities. They were further aroused to admiration by the pluck of the women in the danger buildings where the high explosives were made. In one explosion when 26 women were killed and 30 injured the women

showed the greatest coolness and discipline, and were prompt in helping the wounded and in continuing work; they were also quite undaunted by the deleterious effect of the acids that had to be employed.

The London Society for Women's Service did their share in munition work; they started a munition and aircraft department in July, 1915, and arranged classes in oxy-acetylene welding; their pupils were the first women welders to enter the engineering trade, doing such good work that two years later the Ministry of Munitions, impressed by the value and importance of the school, took over the entire financial responsibility. This was what happened with most of the voluntary associations started by the women, they proved their worth and the Government took them over. The Women's Farm and Garden Union was a typical example; it was afforded full scope and became most important; by the autumn of 1915 it had started a system of training women farmers. Early in 1916 Government provided a grant and the W.F.G.U. was able to launch as an offshoot the Women's National Land Service Corps, but by the end of 1916 the demand for women was greater than could be met, and the Ministry of Agriculture instituted the Women's Land Army, for which the W.N.L.S.C. acted as agents.

There were thus women's services of two kinds, the voluntary and the official; the official coming from the ranks of the voluntary were directly employed by the war departments, and regulated by the Defence of the Realm Act; among these were the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, known as the W.A.A.C.s, the Women's Royal Naval Service, known as the W.R.E.N.s, and the Women's Royal Air Force, the W.R.A.F.s. The Waacs and Wrens did official coding and decoding, intelligence work, kept con-



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fidential records, acted as secretaries, telephonists, paymasters, accountants, rating and ledger clerks, ordinary clerks, shorthand typists, victualling store assistants, postal sorters, stewards, cooks, general domestic workers, orderly messengers, porters, storewomen, bakers, tailoresses, gardeners, wiring hands, mine workers, gas mask and observation station workers; a total in all at its highest strength of 56,000 women and 1,200 officials; 9,500 of them were employed at one time in France. The highest strength of the Wrafs was 25,000 with 566 officers; they did meteorological work, acted as despatch riders, painters, acetylene welders, carpenters, magneto repairers, photographers, drivers and fabric workers. Practically the whole of the gas masks were made by women in 34 factories employing 12,000, and the works of 160 contractors for the department employing a further 90,000. In August, 1917, educated women were trained for inspection work and drafted out to the factories; 800 to 1,000 were appointed, 100 of whom were promoted to check inspecting and called sergeants.

The Army Pay Corps was one of the first to use substitute female clerks; in July, 1915, 479 were employed, and in January, 1916, the numbers had risen to 4,556 clerks and 13 superintendents. In April, 1916, there were 20 clerks employed by the Army and Navy Canteen Board, which was enormously expanded in 1917 to include catering for the Imperial Overseas forces and American and Allied troops, and the number consequently rose to 10,000 mobile and 2,000 immobile.

Gradually in every office and trade women occupied the places left vacant by the men; in the banks, insurance offices and shops; as bus drivers and conductors and ticket collectors; everywhere women were to be seen. The Treasury made an agreement

with the Trade Unions to suspend Trade Union rules. There was no department of life in which women did not exhibit thrift and endeavour to help. Every scrap of paper was saved, every bottle and old tin collected; tennis courts were dug up and turned into potato patches; flowers were only used to brighten the hospitals and make home gay for those on leave. Nothing was wasted; everything was put to some use; everyone was willing to go without that the soldiers might have more; women denied themselves everything.

As early as August, 1915, the *Engineer* declared women were doing work in engineering requiring great skill and intelligence; "work of which any skilled mechanic might be proud." The President of the Iron and Steel Institute admitted that "using the same machine and working the same hours their output was more than double that of the trained mechanic." The fact was the women, most of whom had dear ones in daily peril on land and sea, worked with a strenuousness which no reward could have made them exhibit. One Minister of Munitions said: "Without the aid of women it would have been impossible to win the War"; and another: "It is not too much to say that our armies have been saved and victory assured by the women in the munition factories."

Mr. Joynton Hicks said that not only in munitions, but in every kind of business and profession women had rapidly come to the front as clerks, secretaries and in Government departments; they were even working in that most secret of all institutions, the censor's department, doing away once and for all with the stupid idea that the fair sex cannot keep a secret. He added that something greatly resembling a woman lawyer had arisen during the War, viz., the woman representative on the Munitions tribunals, which gave the woman

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who had to appear before it a sense of fair play because one of her own sex was present to appreciate her difficulties.

Holford Knight said the War had shown the extraordinary diversity of capacity which British women of all ranks had brought to the service of the State in an unparalleled emergency.

In 1917 *The Times* said that the War was changing many things, and nothing more profoundly than the position of women in the national industries. The replacement of men by women in skilled occupations which had hitherto been barred to them had gone to very great lengths, and one of the supreme problems of the future was whether women would have the power to maintain their advantage after the War. The mere prospect of it had done much to modify public opinion on Women's Suffrage. "It would be infinitely better," the article concluded, "that women, like men, should find their own level in any profession where there is no reason in principle against them, than that they should be excluded on grounds which are largely imaginary and can be represented as selfish."

The splendid work of the women touched the popular imagination; all their old opponents were won over, even Asquith. The splendid death of Edith Cavell won from him the words: "She has taught the bravest man among us a supreme lesson of courage, yes, and there are thousands of such women, but a year ago we did not know it."

During the later stages of the War far-sighted women and their supporters were much concerned as to what would happen after the War in regard to the employment of women, when so many hundreds of thousands were in posts created by the exigencies of the War, which would automatically be closed to them on

its conclusion, and the men coming back in large numbers must of course occupy their previous positions, now in most cases held by women. Sir Richard Burbidge was optimistic; speaking at a meeting at Harrod's Stores he said that their women workers had responded to the calls made upon them in a remarkable degree, and it was certain they would never take a back seat in the future. He believed that their services would be more and more in demand, and that the best of them would come forward and earn more money than they had ever done in the past.

The retiring President of the Law Society, urging that women should be allowed to enter the legal profession, asked what was to become of the millions of women now engaged in war work.

Finally a Speaker's Conference, composed of M.P.s, was arranged to discuss electoral reform, and the difficulties contingent on the men being at the War. In the Cabinet Lord Robert Cecil, Lloyd George and Arthur Henderson supported the women's Cause, and Lord Northcliffe took it up: "The women are wonderful; their freshness of mind, their organizing skill are magnificent." The report of the Speaker's Conference recommended a measure of Women's Suffrage, to include the women whose husbands were on the Register, the age limit to be thirty. It was feared that to demand absolute equality would endanger the Cause. A Bill was introduced in the House of Commons and the voting showed a majority of seven to one, and on the second and third Reading was practically unanimous. Lord Curzon's speech assured victory in the House of Lords. The Bill received the Royal assent on February 6th, 1918, and the women celebrated the joyful event with a thanksgiving meeting. Mrs. Fawcett wrote: "It was





INSPECTION OF WRENS IN HYDE PARK



WRENS UNDER ORDERS FOR DEPARTURE





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the greatest moment in my life; we had won after a fight lasting fifty years." The long-looked-forward-to triumph had come about without a blow having been struck for nearly four years. In 1919 8,470,150 women became voters. A further Act was passed a few months after the Franchise Bill, enabling women to stand for Parliament. Mrs. Pankhurst was one of the first to avail herself of the opportunity; she stood as an Independent but failed to obtain election. Among the sixteen women who offered themselves for election the only ones successful were Lady Astor and the Countess Markewitz; the latter never took her seat. Lady Astor, with extraordinary generosity, offered to give up hers to Mrs. Pankhurst, but the latter would not accept it.

As time went on and more and more men were required at the Front, women filled their places until there were very few duties that were not undertaken by women. In November, 1918, the economic status of women reached its highest point. The check came when demobilization began, and gradually all the war activities ceased: the Waacs, the Wrafs, the Wrens, the V.A.D.s, the Women's Legion, the military masseuses, the munition workers and their welfare workers, very gradually ceased to exist. Reluctantly the rather unkempt conductor stepped down for the last time from her bus; out of the banks and insurances the women still more gradually faded; the landwoman was no longer to be seen in her myriads. The men returning, for the most part occupied their old positions; business had received so many blows that it was largely at a standstill and needed to be re-vitalized; girls who had been only partially trained could scarcely cope with the new competitive conditions. There was a slump in women, and as the demand decreased there came a corresponding drop in their earning capacity.

The *Globe* commented sadly that "on all sides there seems to be a tendency to close to women the occupations they have carried on during the War, with a depressing effect on the labour situation from the women's standpoint . . . in the present uncertainty training for any but pre-war occupations seems almost too great a risk." This, coupled with the high cost of living, caused great depression, but the women's champions, foreseeing what was bound to happen, had been hard at work; after much labour and persistency a Bill for the Removal of Sex Disqualification was brought in, and when it was finally passed on December 24th, 1919, simultaneously all sorts of new openings appeared.

The professions to which entrance had been barred now offered access, and among other privileges women might be created Justices of the Peace. Lord Buckmaster's opinion, which he stated in November, 1919, was, that the qualities essential in a good magistrate are: some knowledge of local affairs; freedom from the influence of any political or trade organizations; entire lack of prejudice; a wide knowledge of human nature and a character which is unimpeachable and commands respect. He was in complete agreement, he said, with the principle of appointing women magistrates; he believed there were a number of very capable women who could be appointed to the magisterial Bench with advantage to the administration of justice. Magistrates are nearly always untrained and therefore it is necessary to have a Bench composed of several. Mr. W. L. George, among many others, supported the suggestion. Writing on the subject of juvenile offence he said that to do the work properly it was necessary to make more use of the services of women. It was all very well to say the magistrate should talk like a father, it would be

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better than talking like a magistrate, but it is mothers who reform children, not fathers. Men are not practised in ruling children and do not in the least know how to talk to them, and if the magistrate were awkward the child was likely to grow awkward or sulky. "How can any man expect a girl of fourteen to be natural with him, let alone frank?" he asked. "He will perhaps not be natural himself."

In February, 1920, the Lord Chancellor invited the assistance of Lady Londonderry, Mrs. Lloyd George, Miss Elizabeth Haldane, Mrs. Humphry Ward and Mrs. Sidney Webb, to form a small committee, with Lady Crewe as chairman, to be called the Women's Advisory Committee, and to help him in the selection of women J.P.s.

The first woman magistrate to sit on the Bench was Mrs. Ada Summers, the Mayor of Stalybridge. She was the first and only woman member of the Stalybridge Town Council, and had been elected in 1912. Miss Gertrude Tuckwell was the first woman J.P. to be sworn in in London. Others of the first women elected, in competition with men, were Mrs. Rawstone, wife of the Bishop of Whalley, who was on the Board of Guardians and also Vice-President of the committee for promoting the employment of women in agriculture, and Miss Faithfull, Principal of Cheltenham Ladies' College. Quite a number of the aristocracy willingly undertook the duties; among them the Duchess of Portland, the Duchess of Devonshire, Lady Ampthill, Lady Berkeley, Lady Rous and Lady Greenall, who had been a very indefatigable worker in recreation huts and canteens in France.

It was not the first appearance of women in the Courts even in modern times. A band of twenty ladies, affiliated to the National Union of Women Workers,

had been in the habit for some time past of attending at town and county police courts to give support to women by their presence, help individual cases, and watch local administration and the procedure of the Law in regard to women and children.

There is one woman High Steward, Anne, Viscountess Cowdray, widow of the first viscount, who was elected by the Colchester Town Council to succeed her late husband. She is the first woman to be appointed to the position in England.

Simultaneous with the appearance of women on the Bench was the appearance of women in the jury box. By the passing of the Removal of Sex Disqualification Act they became bound to serve, if qualified, in the same way as a man; i.e., householders paying a rental of £30 a year in London and £20 elsewhere, or occupiers of houses with fifteen windows, or aliens who have been domiciled for ten years, and between the ages of twenty-one and sixty. Marriage does not exempt them, but they are exempted if they follow the professions of Law, medicine, chemistry or dentistry.

The first appearance of women on a modern jury was in April, 1920; that in the good old times they had this privilege is evident from the Court Rolls of Rowington: in 1435 six women were named as jurors on a case of witchcraft; again in 1443 women jurors are mentioned on a case concerning the conflicting claims of two women, and in 1636 a certain Joan Shackspeare was fined fourpence for failing to serve as a juror.

A judge is not compelled to have women on a jury. It is set forth in the regulations that a judge, chairman of quarter sessions, or recorder, may at his own discretion or on the application of one or both of the parties in a case, make an order that a jury shall be



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composed of men only or women only. Further, a woman juror, unlike a man, can claim exemption because of the nature of the evidence or the issues raised in any particular case. On one occasion a man at Colchester objected to three women and they withdrew.

The views of the public were of course divided on the subject: a well-known barrister said the question was, have women sufficiently open minds to wait for the evidence instead of jumping to a conclusion on the opening statement.

Sir Robert Armstrong Jones, a well-known mental specialist, stated his belief that men are less able to endure mental strain than women. Taking the War as the greatest mental test this nation has ever faced, he did not think it could be denied that in it men lost their nerve and women found their nerve. Far greater numbers of men broke down than women. Women are accustomed to nervous shocks and stand them better. For that reason he believed they would serve excellently on juries.

The *Daily Mail* thought the average woman would be just as good at the job as the average male juror; it was not a question of sex at all.

Mr. J. W. Pickles of the Law Society objected to untrained women serving on juries, more particularly in murder trials because women are generally more emotional than men. He declared that some women felt so strongly about their liability to serve on juries that they have caused houses belonging to them to be transferred to their husbands or male relatives so that they should not be ratepayers and therefore liable to serve.

A coroner at Canterbury apologized to a woman for being called to serve on an inquest. "I do not think it at all desirable for women to serve on coroners"

juries," he said. "Had I known of it in time you would not have been called."

On the other hand women have been elected foremen of juries on several occasions, and a judge went so far as to congratulate one of them on the lucid way in which she voiced the decision.

The question of the policewoman has been hotly debated. During the War the work of the women patrols was found so useful that it led to the appointment of official women police in London, but since the War there has been a good deal of opposition and criticism, and the numbers have declined until there are now only fifty women police in the Metropolitan area.

A deputation of the women Members of Parliament Lady Astor, Lady Iveagh, Miss Margaret Bondfield, Miss Susan Lawrence and Miss Ellen Wilkinson waited on the Home Secretary and discussed the further employment of policewomen with him in July, 1928, without much result.

A Royal Commission was recently appointed to inquire into police methods and the general powers and duties of the police in the investigation of crimes and offences. Two women were elected on it: Dame Meriel Talbot, D.B.E., Intelligence Officer of the Overseas Settlement Department, and during the War Woman Adviser to the Ministry of Agriculture; and Miss Margaret Beavan, Liverpool's first Lady Mayor. In the course of the inquiry, Sir William Horwood, the Commissioner of Police, said that there was a popular cry for women police and they must move with the times. The presence of policewomen was useful during the taking of statements. Further questioning elicited that he did not think a woman could be sufficiently well trained to undertake really responsible

police work. He said he would never leave the entire charge of a case to a woman-policeman.

The Chief Constable of Birmingham, Sir Charles Rafter, recently said he did not see why women police should be sworn in or wear uniform. In Birmingham they preferred the policewomen to be looked upon, in a sense, as the guardians of people who may be in need of help or attention. He contended that a policewoman is far better suited to effective and beneficent work when she is not sworn in, and thus has not the power of arrest. He added that they have very delicate duties to perform, and they are better able to perform them without those with whom they come into contact realizing that they are to be feared.

The National Council of Women have taken up the matter; they urge that more women police should be appointed so that children may go to school and play in the parks in safety.

There is one profession to which the passing of the Removal of Sex Disqualification Act did not admit women, and for which very few women have shown any inclination, viz., the Ministry, at least as far as the Church of England is concerned; there are several Non-conformist women ministers. The idea is not a new one; in 1421 it was suggested by a Lollard that women should be allowed to preach.

We have one well-known and famous woman preacher—Miss Maude Royden—born in 1876, educated at Cheltenham Ladies' College and Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, and for three years a worker at the Victoria Women's Settlement, Liverpool. In 1908 she joined the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, and founded the Fellowship services in connection with which she has preached at the Hall in Eccleston Square for many years. But she is unique.

In 1917, when the shortage of men caused women to take up every kind of occupation, the Church League for Women's Suffrage called a conference at which they endeavoured to pass a Resolution "to throw open to churchwomen all opportunities for service now enjoyed by laymen, and to impress upon clergy and laity the duty of considering the Women's Movement in the light of the principles of Christianity." Miss Maude Royden, who was present, asked if there was anything in the Gospels from which it could be deduced that women might speak in a church hall or a schoolroom and not in a church or cathedral. Was any fundamental principle of Christianity at issue? The Women's Movement was a source of vitality, enthusiasm and strength which the Church could not easily ignore. Every other organization was making use of women. It was the tragedy of the Church that she waited for ever to see what was safe. Dr. Letitia Fairfield, who supported the Resolution, urged that "this is the right moment for churchwomen to press their claims for larger opportunities of usefulness."

Every now and then a half-hearted attempt is made to press the claims of women to this right, but it seldom meets with anything but opposition. Not long ago Canon Raven started a crusade urging the shortage of male candidates for Ordination, but he did not meet with much response from women, which he attributed to their reluctance to obtrude their wishes. He contended that the spiritual needs of the working and business girl are not being met, and asked for persons who are "qualified to direct her life whether by discussion or by the sacrament of confession and absolution." He thinks few men are fitted to hear women's confessions, maintaining that "most of us are in our own communion only too well acquainted with cases in which both priest





BUS CONDUCTORS GETTING THE DAY'S STOCK OF TICKETS (1917)



A BUS CONDUCTOR AT WORK





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## THE WAR AND AFTERWARDS

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and penitent have been morally injured; cases of men whose minds are diseased and of women whose feelings have been outraged."

Dr. Hensley Henson, the Bishop of Durham, addressing the Durham Diocesan Conference, and alluding to the enormous decrease in the number of Ordination candidates, declared: "The world wants desperately not female priests and bishops but Christian wives and mothers." He said he could find no reason in the present situation, nor in the spiritual achievements of individual women past or present to justify so great a breach with the traditions of Christendom, as the admission of women to Holy Orders on equal terms with men. He declared that the world needs to-day the faithful fulfilment of women's natural functions; the most menacing evil of our times is the repudiation of the wifely and motherly functions by women, which is dictated by a perverted notion of sexual equality and made possible by the misapplication of science. It led to the disintegration of the family and the withdrawal from Society of the principal discipline in which citizenship is divinely ordained to develop. He said the abuse was deliberate, shameless, and actively propagandist, and constituted a challenge to the Christian church which we dare not ignore. Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., commenting on this speech, said: "A woman who is a wife and mother with a leaning towards Church work would make a better priest in some of the industrial areas than the young curates who are often found there."

The National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship advocated the admission of women to the priesthood and started a campaign which called forth the Bishop of London's declaration that he was strongly opposed to it, and the Bishop of Southwark's opinion

that "There is no possibility of the Church of England allowing women to be ordained to the priesthood." The Rev. Basil Bouchier, Vicar of St. Jude's in the Hampstead Garden Suburb, said he had gone into the matter very carefully some time before, and found that the opinion of women generally was wholly against the admission of their sex to Holy Orders.

There are a number of Congregational women ministers; three of them accompanied the Twentieth Century Mayflower Pilgrims to America in June, 1928; viz., the Rev. Mary Collins, of North Bow Congregational Church, who was the first woman to be ordained a Congregational minister, the Rev. Edith Pickles, B.A., who succeeded her husband as minister to Stanley Church, Liverpool, five years ago, and the Rev. Dorothy Wilson, who is the daughter of a K.C., and studied at Mansfield College, Oxford; she is assistant minister at Carr's Lane Church, Birmingham.

The Fellowship of Women Ministers held their second annual conference at Oxford in 1928; it was presided over by the Rev. Constance Coltman, M.A., B.D., who has a joint pastorate with her husband at Oxford, and was attended by about twenty women. The first women pastors Scotland has produced were there. There are two of them, Presbyterians who have become Congregationalists because their own denomination is closed to them.

Ten years after the War it was felt that the time had come to press that the inequality of sex should be removed and women admitted to the franchise on the same terms as men. There was no agitation although four young Suffragettes would have liked to create a scene when they carried a petition to the King which they were not allowed to deliver; one of them was carried kicking from the door by an amused policeman.

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The fact is, women had so thoroughly proved their capacity that very few wished to deny them the privilege. Accordingly a Bill, the Representation of the People (Equal Franchise), was introduced in the House and passed its first Reading. At the second Reading early in 1928, Sir W. Joynson Hicks, the Home Secretary, said it was the logical conclusion of a series of Reform Bills, dealing with the Act of 1832. The Act of 1918 had made an enormous addition to the electoral—thirteen millions. Under the new Bill the qualification would be the same for men and women: three months' residence in premises or occupation of business premises of not less than £10 annual value. The main opposition seemed to be on the ground that the control of political power would be transferred from men to women; that was why the House had previously put a purely artificial restriction limiting the number of women voters. Mr. Bonar Law had said in 1922: "I have been a consistent supporter of women's franchise, and even at the time the Franchise Bill of 1918 was passed I felt that the discrimination between men and women could not be permanent." He could not imagine that anyone nowadays would suggest that women were intellectually unfitted for the vote or that their judgment was not as sound as that of a man. The progress of women in all classes of Society and in all businesses and professions had been startling in its rapidity, and they could not be excluded from the right to vote. At the moment a woman could become a Member at twenty-one but she could not vote for a Member. When the present Bill was passed women voters would be in a majority of two millions. There was practically no opposition; the Bill passed the second Reading with only ten dissentients. The Opposition considered it a ruse to get Conservative votes and called

it the Vote for Flappers Bill. The Duchess of Atholl, speaking at a Woman's Unionist Association, said it was a little bit thick to call them flappers, and if young ladies of twenty-one would condescend to lower their skirts an inch or two they would hear no more of that very insulting word.

Mr. Bridgman, the First Lord of the Admiralty, speaking on the subject at Oswestry, said that girls know as much about politics as boys. The women workers in that division had been his great standby, and it was through their work and the starting of women's committees that they had won the last election.

At the third Reading the general feeling was that the new privilege would widen women's interests and inspire them with a greater sense of civic responsibilities; and would bring a truer comradeship and a closer co-operation between men and women in the common task of grappling with those great national questions which it is the duty of an enfranchised democracy to solve. Mr. Baldwin said once this Bill was law the last fraction of truth about inequality would have gone for ever. The War had taught him many things; he realized that it must be the men and the women together; by their common work together, each doing that for which they are the better fitted, they would provide such an environment that each immortal soul as it is born on earth should have a fairer chance and a fairer hope. The last opponents feebly raised their voices. One Conservative gloomily predicted that no Conservative would ever be returned to Parliament when the franchise was extended to twenty-one; Socialists would promise the new electors a new heaven and a new earth, and working-class girls would be easily convinced. Lord Peel countered this with his belief that women would have a steady and Conservative influence in politics.





A GIRL COAL HEAVER



WOMEN'S FIRE BRIGADE AT WORK



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Lord Banbury quoted a verse from Isaiah : " As for my people, children are their oppressors and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err and destroy the way of thy paths " ; and then a voice was heard to murmur that " Men did all the heavy work," which brought forth the smart retort from Miss Wilkinson that she was one who thought the House of Commons should be representative of all classes in the nation, and she therefore rejoiced that there was in it a Member who held the pre-historic view which had just been expressed. The opposition faded away and the Bill passed by a majority of forty to one.

Baldwin, speaking at the Queen's Hall at a demonstration organized by the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship on March 9th, 1928, said : " Sixty years ago John Stuart Mill moved a Franchise Bill in the House, and now in a few weeks you will have legal recognition of your equality with men." He urged the women to try and realize that a new freedom means a new duty, for freedom without duty and without obligation is merely license and anarchy.

The Equal Franchise Bill was finally passed by the House of Lords just before Ascot, 1928 ; there were no speeches, and at the next Royal Commission it became law.

Lady Astor said : " I thank God that women have the vote. You may fool the men but you cannot deceive the women, who know too well that the evils of society come from the evils in the human heart."

There was great jubilation among all the Women's Suffrage Societies. The Women's National Liberal Federation at their annual meeting, attended by a thousand delegates, welcomed the Equal Franchise Bill " with rejoicing that women have come into their right

as citizens" and "gratitude to those pioneers who worked with sacrifice and courage to secure the freedom and the opportunities which are the heritage of the women of to-day."

The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies arranged a summer school at St. Hilda's College, Oxford, to give the newly enfranchised women an opportunity to study the problems of democracy, and lectures were given on the ideals of the three main political parties, the history and meaning of the Women's Movement, and the legal status of wives and mothers, etc.

One hundred and thirty Suffragette ex-prisoners dined together privately at a Whitehall restaurant on the tenth anniversary of obtaining the first vote, and talked of their past experiences. They were the remnant of some thousand women who had been in prison during the campaign.

Two of our latest women M.P.s are Lady Iveagh and Mrs. Runciman. Lady Iveagh was the fourth woman to succeed to her husband's seat; the others were Lady Astor, Mrs. Wintringham and Mrs. Philipson. Lady Iveagh had been an active Unionist worker for more than twenty years, for the last three years of which she was chairman of the Conservative and Unionist Women's Organization. Her idea is that women throw light upon domestic problems and interests to which men may not be so keenly alive, such as infant welfare, health, sanitation, house construction, town planning, slum clearance, juvenile employment and children's education. She takes the practical standpoint that no sensible husband would try and arrange the business of his household without the advice and co-operation of his wife.

At Mrs. Walter Runciman's candidature in March,



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1928, at a by-election at St. Ives, three generations of Runcimans took the field, the candidate's two sons and daughter and her eighty-one years old father-in-law, Sir Walter Runciman. The local Liberals boasted that neither Conservatives nor Labourites could find a married couple with qualifications for political service equal to those of Mr. and Mrs. Runciman. Mrs. Runciman's view of her new duties was : " I enormously enjoy being in the House of Commons; I find it a most fascinating occupation to sit there constantly listening to the stream of oratory." She has proved to be the possessor of a pretty wit, and is well able to hold her own in debate.

Miss Margaret Kidd recently made a gallant fight at a by-election in West Lothian as a Conservative candidate. She is the first and so far the only woman member of the Scottish Bar, becoming an advocate in 1923, and has done a large amount of political work on behalf of her late father, who was the previous member. " I feel that in going forward I am doing what my father would have wished," she said. Mr. Kidd, who won the seat from Labour in 1924, had a large legal practice; he was exceedingly popular, and one of the most sought after Members who ever represented a Scottish constituency. There was considerable disappointment when his daughter failed to obtain election.

Mrs. Pankhurst lived just long enough to see her ideals of Women's Suffrage realized to the fullest possible extent. She died as she had lived, fighting for a Cause in which she believed with all her heart. For twenty-five years it had been Votes for Women, and recently she had turned her wonderful energy to the Conservative Cause. She was one of the most gifted and selfless of women workers. From all parts of the country women, many of them wearing the old sashes



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## *BRITISH WOMEN IN TWENTIETH CENTURY*

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of purple, green and white, assembled to pay her the last honours at her funeral on June 18th, 1928. A fitting tribute was the huge laurel wreath, with purple and white flowers at the base and the word "Victory" inscribed on it, which was placed on the coffin.

A happier occasion was that other gathering of Suffrage women who assembled at Crosby Hall to do honour to Dame Millicent Fawcett on her eightieth birthday. One hundred and seventy of her old friends connected with the twenty-six Suffrage Societies of which she had once been a member, presented her with a cheque for £1,000, which she in turn handed over with a charming little speech to the Crosby Hall Endowment Fund, to endow a room to be named after her at Crosby Hall, which has now been opened as a Hall of Residence for University Women.

## VI

### WOMEN AND THE LEGAL PROFESSION

THE legal profession remained obdurately closed to women for years after the reluctant opening of the medical profession; but in all their attempts to storm it there was never any recurrence of the violent scenes that preceded the advent of the woman doctor and the woman voter. The campaign was conducted with due decorum throughout. The women were not without precedents; in the thirteenth century Anne, the famous Countess of Pembroke, was hereditary sheriff and sat with the judges on the Bench at the Assizes; in fact, before the legal profession was established in 1322, persons going to Law could be represented in Court by anyone they chose to appoint, and it is on record that they sometimes chose women. There were women lecturers on Civil Law in the Middle Ages. There is a report of a trial on June 12th, 1563, in which Lady Crawford appeared as advocate for the defence of a prisoner who was ultimately acquitted. In Italy at the beginning of the fourteenth century a famous canonist publicly acknowledged his indebtedness to his wife in solving difficult questions of Law, and allowed his clever daughter, married to an eminent counsellor, to take his place in the lecture-room. Another Bolognese lady was made a Doctor of Laws at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

The earliest pioneer of modern times in Great Britain was a Scotch girl, Margaret Hall, who in 1900 applied to the Society of Law Agents for permission to enter

for the Solicitors' Preliminary Examination ; she was not opposed, and the application was placed before the Court to ascertain if it were legally possible. The decision was adverse, the judges holding that the word "persons" whom the Court was authorized to admit, could only be interpreted in accordance with inveterate usage as "male persons," and that a woman could not be regarded as a "person" at all in the legal sense.

In 1903 Bertha Cave sought admission as a student to Gray's Inn on the ground that there was nothing in the statutes to prohibit the Benchers from accepting her. But unfortunately they had the right to refuse without any adequate reason, and "entrenched behind the impregnable defence of immemorial custom," they politely declined her application. The undaunted young woman appealed, and appeared in person to press her claim before seven justices. They granted her five minutes, the Chancellor, Lord Halsbury, concluding the hearing with the pronouncement that "There was no precedent for ladies being called to the English Bar, and the tribunal were unwilling to create such a precedent." Miss Cave afterwards candidly averred that she wanted to practise at the Bar rather than as a solicitor, because it was the more refined occupation. "The whole profession can be summed up shortly," she declared, "by saying that the solicitor gets the kicks and the barrister gets the halfpence."

In the same year Christabel Pankhurst made a similar application and met with the same fate. It was said that this refusal drove her into militancy; her father had been a well-known member of the Bar.

But the great attack was made in 1913; four girls, all possessing first-class University qualifications, applied to the Law Society for permission to enter for the preliminary legal examination; they were Gwyneth

Bebb and Karin Costelloe, who had taken Firsts at Oxford, Maud Ingram, who had obtained Honours in History and Law Triposes at Cambridge and had already been working for six months with a firm of solicitors, and Lucy Nettlefold, still at Newnham, who had taken a First in Part I of the Law Tripos. She was later to be the first woman to take both parts of the Law Tripos at Cambridge. They based their claim on a clause in the Solicitors' Act of 1843, which set forth that "Every word importing the masculine gender only shall extend and be applied to a female as well as a male, unless it be otherwise specially provided or there be something in the subject or context repugnant to such construction." The Law Society rejecting them on the ground of sex, they immediately commenced four separate actions against the Society, claiming they had a right to be examined and to enter the profession of solicitor. Miss Costelloe stated in a letter to the Press that one of their greatest incentives to fight this matter was their desire to change public opinion of women's capacity—to have women regarded as ordinary competent human beings.

Mr. (later Lord) Buckmaster, who championed the women's cause throughout, pleading for Miss Bebb, said the whole question turned on whether there was anything in the subject which was "repugnant," and he contended that there was not, as a woman could satisfy the conditions as well as a man, because the only conditions were fitness and capacity. He asserted that there was nothing in any Act that excluded women or imposed any disability upon the sex, and therefore women were eligible for admission; whether people would employ them or not was another matter. It was not a question whether a woman could fulfil the duties as well as a man, but whether she could fulfil them.

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## BRITISH WOMEN IN TWENTIETH CENTURY

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In giving judgment Justice Joyce said that according to Common Law a woman was incapable of executing a public function; under the Acts of 1830 a woman was disqualified by sex, and there had been no suggestion of an alteration in any Act since; he felt convinced none had even been contemplated. The action was accordingly dismissed.

In December, 1913, Lord Robert Cecil pleaded for Miss Bebb before the Court of Appeal. Seated together the four girls "gave a fine impression of competent womanhood," one newspaper commented admiringly, but the judge, Lord Phillimore, was not to be impressed. He admitted that "no doubt many women . . . are in intelligence, education and competence superior to many candidates who go up for the Law Society's examinations, but long usage ought to govern the Law. Three hundred years ago Lord Coke said that no woman could be an attorney, and there was no instance, since the solicitors became a profession, of a woman being admitted, or of it being considered possible that she could be admitted. . . . This was inveterate usage. Such usage was the foundation of the greater part of Common Law."

The newspapers plunged into controversy; the *Queen* suggested that the interesting point might be raised that if a woman is not a "person" then those provisions of the Law which dictate that "persons" shall be punished for violations of any Act of Parliament cannot apply to women. The *Manchester Guardian* saw "no serious reasons against their admission." The *Daily Chronicle* thought it was impossible to have the women's interests properly adjusted by Parliament "until there are women lawyers." The *Liverpool Post* inquired if there were not "some feminine prejudice" on the opposing side. The *Daily Citizen* remarked that





DAME HENRIETTA BARNETT, D.B.E.  
1928

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## WOMEN AND THE LEGAL PROFESSION

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“most of the differential treatment of women is . . . a survival from the age when privilege was associated with celibacy,” and dismissing any fear that the legal profession might be flooded as “a chimera,” declared : “The problem is not admission but the winning of a practice . . . if they can find clients willing to rely on their secrecy and discretion.” A “Liverpool barrister” thought that “in women emotional feelings would be prone to be roused to the detriment of pure justice.” It was recalled that President Choate described the women lawyers in the United States of America as “inspiring in triumph and consoling in defeat,” and that Lord Russell of Killowen had called them “very charming juniors.” A would-be wit repeated Addison’s saying : “Were women admitted to plead in Courts of Judicature I am persuaded they would carry the eloquence of the Bar to greater heights than it has yet arrived at. If anyone doubts this let him be present at the debates which frequently arise among the ladies of the British fishery.” The *Glasgow Record* referred to “the feminine trait of seeing through a stone wall what is not on the other side,” and feared “women’s very charm may deflect ordinary procedure in an alarming way.” The *Belfast Evening Telegraph* contended that “very few women care two straws whether they are eligible to become lawyers or not.” The *Daily Telegraph*, urging their claims, said : “Women have become members of Royal Commissions, visitors of lunatic asylums, registrars of births, deaths and marriages, members of dispensary wards, road surveyors, churchwardens, sextons, parish clerks, town and city councillors, aldermen, mayors, factory and workshop inspectors, local Government inspectors, post-mistresses, census clerks, insurance commissioners and members of insurance committees.” When we remember that this was in 1913, in pre-

war days, we shall realize that women were pressing forward.

As for the women themselves, Eleanor Rathbone advanced three reasons why they should be admitted to the legal profession. (1) Many of the worst wrongs under which women, and specially young girls, suffer never come to light because the victims cannot bring themselves to place their case and all its humiliating details before a man. (2) Because it is unfair to exclude educated women whose ways of earning a livelihood are much restricted. (3) Women's recognized ability as speakers, their quickness and adaptability of mind, and power of putting themselves mentally in the place of others." Lucy Nettlefold maintained: "In divorce especially, it is far easier for the woman to have at least the preliminary inquiries conducted by one of her own sex . . . a large number of cases never reach the Courts." Karin Costelloe said: "Women are now educated and expected to earn their own living. It is no longer right, therefore, to keep shut against them any profession which they are qualified to practise. . . . The best course for them is to devote all their energy to getting a Bill drafted and passed through Parliament with the least possible delay."

Lord Wolmer made two efforts to introduce a Bill to enable women to become barristers, solicitors and Parliamentary agents without success.

Instigated by the women, J. W. Hills drafted a Bill which set forth that "A woman shall not be disqualified by sex or marriage for being admitted as a solicitor, or for acting or practising as a solicitor under the Solicitors' Act of 1843, and the Acts amending the same, and the other enactments for the time being in force relating to solicitors," and introduced it into the House of Commons on March 5th, 1914. Mr. Hills

urged that "women are very well qualified for certain branches of the profession, and there is no earthly reason why they should not have the chance of entering it if they want to. Whether they succeed or fail—and I think they will succeed—they should get their opportunity." The Bill was backed by five Unionists—three of whom were solicitors and two barristers—and the chairman of the Labour Party, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald. A committee was formed for the Admission of Women to the Solicitors' Profession, which, within the next three weeks, sent a deputation which included Lord Robert Cecil, Sir Frederick Pollock, Mrs. Humphry Ward, Dr. Garrett Anderson, Dr. Jane Walker, Mrs. Fawcett, Miss Violet Markham and Miss Mary McArthur, to the Chancellor, Lord Haldane. To support their case they pointed out to the Lord Chancellor that he had himself appointed two women as Justices of the Peace under the Lunacy Act. Both these women were chairmen of Boards of Guardians, in which capacity they were sometimes called upon to sign orders for paupers to be removed to asylums, and Lord Haldane had appointed them for the purpose of certifying lunatics. The Lord Chancellor received the deputation cordially; he said he was entirely in favour of the principle of the Bill . . . that the Prime Minister and the Law officers of the Crown were all in favour of it . . . the women had that sympathy in their favour . . . if they watched the situation and kept in communication with the Attorney-General he was sure they would find a sympathetic ear. . . . He was strongly of opinion that Nature and not Law should determine the disabilities of women.

Some exploits of the militant Suffragettes at this juncture unfortunately aroused much public indignation, one violent opponent stating: "For several months



now many educated women have exhibited an utter want of respect for the Law, in that they have frequently broken it in the most dastardly way by wanton destruction of property, arson, assaults and other disgraceful actions. Women who are now prohibited from going to public places of resort . . . and against whom Cabinet Ministers and their property have to be specially guarded, ought not surely in their present frame of mind to be allowed to have any part in the administration of our laws or the conduct of legal proceedings."

Another champion, Mr. Holford Knight, answered this attack: "Recent disgraceful events have unquestionably prejudiced the question . . . but care would be taken to exclude delinquents from a status for which their unfitness had been demonstrated. We are seeking to secure that competence shall have an open way to its fulfilment. We are determined to remove barriers . . . which serve to exclude from the service of the community those who are ready and fitted to perform its tasks. We intend to release the great banked-up reservoir of unused talent in women so that it may flood the land and raise the productivity of the State. Their claim is a demand of educated women, and an inevitable development of the modern educational movement."

The Law Society determined to oppose the second Reading of the Bill, and Sir Homewood Crawford, senior member of the City of London Solicitors, gave as his reason for opposing it: "The profession just now is suffering from severe depression, owing largely to comparatively recent legislation and the great increase of officialism, making it exceedingly difficult for the younger members of the profession, and many of the older members, to pay their expenses. It seems extra-

ordinary," he added, "that there should be this sudden interest in women on the part of those high in authority, when several of them consider women unworthy of possessing the vote."

And then the War broke out and everything seemed to stop, but as we have already seen it was to prove a help rather than a hindrance. In 1915 the clerk to the magistrates appeared in Court attended by a lady assistant, "to release a man for the Front, and to show that the work can be done by ladies." In October of the same year, in consequence of his male assistants having joined the army, or resigned to engage in munition work, the Town Clerk of Motherwell appointed Miss Annand, one of his assistants, Deputy Town Clerk; the appointment was sanctioned by the Town Council. This was the first time a woman was appointed to such a position in England; it necessitated her appearance on the Bench at the Police Court. Lord Haldane soon afterwards said: "I certainly desire to see as a very important public reform, as many offices thrown open to women as can be thrown open, and if my views had any effect there would be very few offices indeed from which they would be debarred."

A well-known firm of solicitors made an innovation by engaging a pretty young woman as clerk. Questioned as to her reception in the Courts, she confessed: "However serious I am they *will* smile, and I feel they do not take me seriously." But the firm were sufficiently encouraged by results to engage three more girls.

In January, 1916, a committee was appointed by Government to consider the best means of substituting women for men in various occupations, and they reported two months later that they had found "women of all classes eager to shoulder the national burden."

Mrs. Fawcett thought this the psychological moment to re-open the question of women and the legal profession, and wrote an appeal in the *Morning Post* that it should be reconsidered. She declared that "one of the things which have been completely changed by the War is the general conception by the man in the street of what women can and cannot do. . . . When Miss Nightingale began her great work of reorganizing military nursing there were loud outcries that she was stepping outside woman's sphere. . . . They have shown they can do first-rate work in all kinds of professions and occupations formerly closed to them. There must be about 1,500,000 women who can never marry because there are not enough men to go round."

On February 20th, 1917, Lord Buckmaster formally presented in the House of Lords a Bill similar to that which had been introduced to the House of Commons in 1914, the operative clause of which was: "A woman shall not be disqualified by sex or marriage from being admitted as a solicitor or from acting or practising as a solicitor. . . ." He confidently predicted that sooner or later all boards bearing the inscription, "Female trespassers will be prosecuted," would have to come down, adding: "I look forward with pleasurable anticipation to the day when women will stand at the Bar of your Lordships' House and plead their clients' case before the highest tribunal in the land. The true sphere of a woman's work ought to be measured by the world's need for her services and by her capacity to perform the work . . . the true limits of woman's activity were those which had been fixed by the hand of Nature and not those imposed by the Law of the land. . . ."

The Lord Chancellor, criticizing, said that to his mind the fact that women were admitted to the pro-

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## WOMEN AND THE LEGAL PROFESSION

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fession of medicine and practised it with great success afforded no argument whatever for inviting women to enter the profession of the Law in competition with men. The question was not one of Trade Unionism; it was what was the proper sphere of women. He might be old-fashioned in these matters, but he did not believe that the active practice of a profession was compatible with the proper work of women as mothers and in attending to their families. He regretted that there were many women who had not an opportunity of marriage in this country. Probably in time opportunities would be found for them in other parts of the Empire where they could become the mothers of mighty nations. Lord Halsbury, also in opposition, said it was true a woman had sat on the Woolsack but she had to adjourn the proceedings and go away in order to become the mother of Edward I. Cool judgment and absence of partisanship were qualities which a solicitor ought to possess . . . and those were qualities which were not commonly found in woman. The Bill, however, went through its principal stage accompanied by good-humoured applause.

Lord Buckmaster, speaking of his Bill in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, said: "I am of opinion that a woman who is intellectually capable of qualifying for a profession should at least be permitted to try and practise it. She should be allowed to take her chance in the struggle for success with men. It is not right for any class of people in the State to suffer from a sense of injustice. . . . Into every avenue of life into which women have advanced they have had to force the gates; they have never been opened from within."

Colonel J. W. Hills said in the *Manchester Despatch*: "I do not myself think that great numbers



will come in at any rate at first. The time and money required to make yourself a solicitor will keep many out. A father who will gladly support a son for five years and pay five hundred guineas for his articles will think twice before risking such an investment on a daughter. But I believe the quality will make up for the quantity, and that educated women will enter to a substantial extent." He said the future held many possibilities. A woman with great gifts of advocacy might make herself a name at the Bar. And solicitors would certainly find that women make excellent managing clerks, especially in conveyancing business. Also he believed that many firms would find it advantageous to have at least one woman partner. Woman, he asserted, will take a far more prominent part in the world of affairs. Her interests and her point of view will bulk ever larger and larger. The firms who do not adapt themselves to the new world will find that they are left behind and that business goes to their rivals. He said it was unjust to woman to keep her out of an honourable and profitable profession, and harmful to the public to deprive the world of her service. . . .

Meantime the Law Society and the Benchers had been discussing the matter. Mr. Holford Knight, speaking at the annual general meeting of the Bar, asked that the question should be reconsidered in the light of the further experience which had been gained during the War of the extraordinary capacity shown by women in many spheres of activity. Women were now occupying responsible positions requiring mental qualities, integrity, dignity and civic responsibility. . . . In the situation in which we were likely to find ourselves after the War, the nation would have to mobilize all the intelligence and capacity which it could



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discover, and in making all the energy which could be brought to carry on the nation's work, regard must be had to capacity and not to sex. . . . The legal profession had attracted the finest intellects in this and every civilized community, and there were in this country women who were fit to join that company, and had shown by their talents and character their fitness to serve the State in the capacity of members of the Bar. Another member drew attention to the women lawyers in other countries. In France women had had the right to practise since 1900; in Sweden they might practise as either barristers or solicitors if unmarried; they had practised as lawyers in Denmark since 1906, in some of the cantons of Switzerland, in Finland, Norway, the Netherlands, the Argentine Republic, New Zealand, parts of Canada, throughout the greater part of Australia, in the United States of America, except Georgia, Arkansas and Virginia; even in Russia four women had been admitted to the Bar. After further discussion, however, when the vote was taken the women were found to have only twenty-two supporters out of the two hundred members present.

The *Nineteenth Century's* caustic comment was: "One of the signs of unrest was the proposal at the general meeting of the Bar on the 18th of January that women should be admitted to the profession. Naturally this foolish motion was rejected by a majority of about nine to one in a meeting that represented about ten per cent. of the practising members of the Bar. This movement is one of those ebullitions of sentiment flowing from the useful and noble work done by women in the War. The fact that women nurse and sew and wait at canteens is no indication of their capacity for the legal profession. If there is one calling in the world

for which women are conspicuously unfitted it is the Law. Putting aside the George Eliots and Humphry Wards, who are not five per cent. of their sex, women have no idea of relevance or analogy or evidence."

The Secretary of the Law Society sent the following letter to every member of the House of Lords in regard to the Bill:

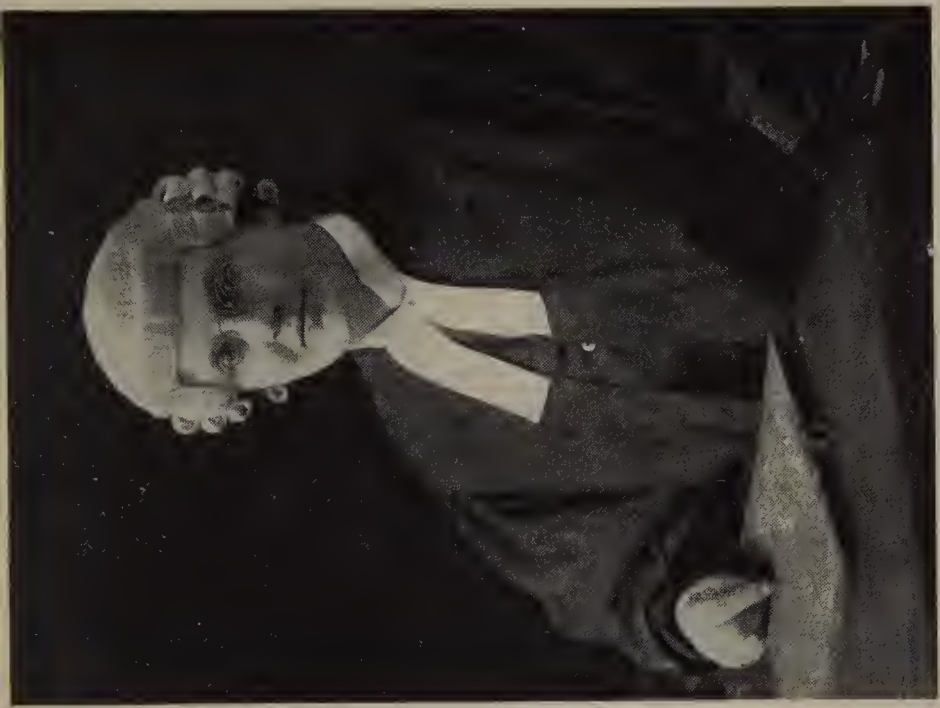
"MY LORD,—The Council of the Law Society venture to request your Lordship to vote against this Bill on its merits as well as on the ground that the present time is most inopportune for the introduction of such a measure. The great majority of solicitors of military age, and of articled clerks in training to become solicitors, are now fighting for their country. It is they who will be affected by the new legislation. . . . There is no present demand for such a Bill from the public, and no harm can possibly ensue to anyone by its postponement. The Council recognize that the industrial and economic position of women may have to be reconsidered after the War, but it is submitted that this subject should be treated by Parliament as a whole, and that during the War to select one branch of one profession only to be the subject of legislation is unfair, and is an unsatisfactory and piecemeal method of dealing with the matter."

When this letter was written 4,000 solicitors and articled clerks, and 1,300 barristers had joined the Forces, and a number of them had been killed.

A very able woman was now putting her shoulder to the wheel: Miss Helena Normanton, B.A. She had taken a First in History and a French diploma, and was a University Extension lecturer and a well-known speaker on social questions. She is descended from a



THE DUCHESS OF BEDFORD



MRS. HELENA NORMANTON



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great legal family, the Montacutes, and is a direct descendant of Alice de Montacute, who in 1407 tested the right of women to sit by proxy in the King's Privy Council in the greatest constitutional case ever brought by a woman in the history of this country, and won it. She applied to the Benchers of the Middle Temple for admission as a student of the Inn immediately after the enfranchisement of women became Law. Her application was sponsored by two members of the Middle Temple and supported by Lord Robert Cecil and Dr. David Murray, one of the most distinguished legal lights in Scotland. Miss Normanton herself explained the position in the *Daily Graphic*: "If women cannot stand for a few hours in Court; if, when getting up briefs they lose themselves in details and become so over-anxiously conscientious that they do not obtain justice for their clients; if they do not act as dignified and responsible officers in one of the most exacting and noble professions upon earth then the punishment will fit the crime: they will get no clients. Examinations must be as difficult and professional conduct as subject to due restraint for women as for men. The enfranchisement of women has made their exclusion from any calling they desire to enter a practical impossibility in the long run. Nevertheless it is not as a feminist but as a human being desirous of serving the community in a particular function that the present applicant has applied for admission as a law student."

Miss Normanton received the following reply to her application :

"DEAR MISS NORMANTON,—I am directed to inform you that at a parliament held on Thursday, February 21st, 1918, the Master and the Bench of the Honourable



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## BRITISH WOMEN IN TWENTIETH CENTURY

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Society of the Middle Temple carefully considered your application for admission as a student of the Middle Temple and unanimously refused it."

Miss Normanton's sole comment was: "I regard this as merely the first stage of a contest which will not be a long one in view of the fact that I have behind me six million enfranchised women who will not tolerate for long this absurdity of the Benchers." Miss Normanton's application was endorsed at an enthusiastic meeting by the National Union of Women Workers, the most powerful body of organized women in the country, embracing through its 153 affiliated societies no less than 2,500,000 women.

On the 6th March, 1918, Lord Buckmaster moved the second Reading of his Bill. Since he had brought it forward in the previous year, 6,000,000 women had been entrusted with the Parliamentary Vote. He said he saw no reason why women should not be admitted to the Bar, and he believed that the passage of this Bill would be the most certain way to bring about that reform. If a woman were by her qualities pre-eminently fitted to discharge any public duty and were better fitted than a male competitor, why, in the public interest, should she not be allowed to discharge it. In spite of opposition the Bill passed its second Reading in the House of Lords, and was immediately afterwards included in the House of Commons Order paper, but Mr. Bonar Law, in answer to a question of Major Hills, announced that no time could be allocated for its discussion as it was a private Member's Bill, and moreover it was controversial.

The women felt that if only time could be obtained for its discussion in the Lower House, a strong majority would be found to support it. There were signs of

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weakening in the opposition. A comment of the *Daily Mirror's* was : " A great percentage of solicitors' clerks are on military service and women have filled many of their places for months past. They have even invaded the precincts of the Temple, where before the War they were almost unknown. Young women are issuing writs, filing affidavits, issuing subpoenas and attending summonses every day, and with such unruffled air that they might have been doing the business all their lives."

Mr. Bell, one of their champions among the Benchers, related how he had himself seen a lady official at the Law Courts presented with a " bouquet of very excellent roses " by a Master of the Supreme Court.

The *Solicitors' Journal* said : " Female Suffrage has been accepted by the House of Commons by a majority of 385 to 55 ; we suggest that the continued opposition of solicitors will have little more effect than to rob of graciousness a change that will most probably come."

The women therefore organized a Memorial, setting forth : " We know we have behind us the united support of the organized women of the country, and we therefore urge that the Government will give time for, or itself adopt, Lord Buckmaster's Bill, and give all facilities for its immediate passage through the House of Commons." It was signed by the Principals of Newnham, Somerville and Lady Margaret Hall, Mrs. Sidney Webb, Dr. Scharlieb, the Duchess of Marlborough, Mrs. Creighton, Lady Henry Somerset, Mrs. J. R. Green, Lady Margaret Sackville, Miss Clara Butt, Mrs. H. A. L. Fisher, Dr. Garrett Anderson, Mrs. Fawcett, Mrs. Humphry Ward, Evelyn Sharpe, May Sinclair, Olive Schreiner, Elizabeth Robins, Maude Royden, Mary McArthur, Margaret Bondfield, Susan

Lawrence, Jane Harrison and many others, and was presented to Lloyd George and Bonar Law.

The hand of the Solicitor-General was somewhat forced at this critical moment: wishing to carry a measure reducing the number of examinations for solicitors to two instead of three in a year, he was obliged to give an undertaking to consult the Government on the possibilities of extending facilities to the Women's Bill. The *Law Journal* remarked severely: "If the advocates of the admission of women to the legal profession choose to adopt such methods as these to advance their cause, they must not be surprised if they are met with the contention that the women on whose behalf they speak might find some difficulty in adapting themselves to the best traditions of the profession . . . what the supporters of Lord Buckmaster's inopportune Bill are striving to do is to take advantage of a temporary state of national affairs to introduce a permanent change in professional life. If, as we believe, the great majority of the younger members of the profession who are gallantly fighting for their country and whose interests might be seriously affected by the admission of women are opposed to the proposal, it would be a most unworthy thing to adopt it in their absence."

The long intervals between the Readings of the Bill in the Upper and Lower Houses, and the frequent postponements, prolonged the struggle interminably, it seemed to the eager women, and the matter aroused much interest in the Colonies and abroad.

An Australian woman barrister wrote: "The Law is admittedly a most serious profession, and women were some time before their thoughts turned to it. Up to date seven have qualified in Victoria as barristers and solicitors, and three more will be qualified this year.

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. . . In the future, women throughout Australia will more and more take up various occupations, but I do not anticipate they will ever crowd the learned professions. The work is hard and trying, and only those who love it will follow it. But if they can do it let them." That is the verdict of the Australian man, who is so sure of his own virility and capacity for succeeding in the world. The Australian attitude towards women all through has been that she must carry half the burden and therefore must share the privileges.

On April 11th, 1919, on Ladies' night of the Union Society at the Middle Temple, Helena Normanton opened the debate "That all branches of the legal profession should be opened to women," offering an excellent plea and concluding with the words: "The better the lawyer, the less he fears the woman lawyer." One speaker contended that "No lady would ever conduct a case like a gentleman." "What chance," asked an able but very plain K.C., "should I have with a jury against a fair and pleasing pleader?" There were a number of women present, among whom Miss Sorabji, a famous Indian law student in a flame-coloured gown with a scarf of the same colour over her dark hair, was a distinguished figure. The voting was now for the women: 34 to 28.

Miss Normanton had been officially informed that her proper course was, as an appellant from the decision of the Benchers, to lodge a petition at the House of Lords, addressed to the Lord Chancellor, the President of the Probate Divorce and Admiralty Division, the Master of the Rolls and all the other High Court Judges; and with the Benchers themselves. A petition was accordingly prepared and lodged on the 24th July.

The following intimation of forthcoming legislation to obviate the necessity for this hearing was given



officially to Miss Normanton for insertion in *The Times*: "The hearing of Miss Normanton's appeal from the decision of the Benchers of the Middle Temple may be expected to be fixed some time near the end of March unless some definite statement of the intention of the Government *to deal by legislation* with the admission of women to the Bar has been made by then." This was the first sign upon the horizon of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Bill. Before the date indicated it was introduced by the Government and having passed both Houses of Parliament became Law on December 24th, 1919. Within a few hours of its enactment Miss Helena Normanton, with characteristic promptitude, obtained admission as a member of the Middle Temple. She was the only woman admitted as a Law student in 1919 and is therefore senior among the women barristers.

Miss Bebb had married and was now Mrs. Thompson, but she, too, eagerly seized the opening; and on January 11th, 1920, for the first time in the history of the Inns of Court women students in robes dined in the Middle Temple hall. They had a separate robing-room and wore severely quiet attire. The Benchers did not acknowledge their presence. Queen Elizabeth was the only woman who had previously dined in that hall. Four other women dined the same evening in various other Inns of Court. On January 31st twelve women registered articles of clerkship with the Law Society.

The newspapers managed to extract a good deal of jocularly out of the advent of "Portia." They hazarded surmises as to whether a fifth Inn would have to be established, and propounded solutions for the question of robes. They made quite a sensational event of the first dinner in hall, and when women introduced the



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revolutionary idea of washing the wigs, which had never occurred to men in all their centuries of contented wear, a note of admiration crept into their comments.

Miss Costelloe, now Mrs. Stephen, had already given up Law for medicine, and Miss Nettlefold had also dropped it in order to become manager of her father's highly successful business. But all the four pioneers were honoured guests at a banquet given by the Committee for the Admission of Women to the Legal Profession at the House of Commons on March 8th, 1920, to celebrate the passing of the Sex Disqualification Removal Act, at which the Lord Chancellor, Lord Birkenhead, was the chief guest; there were also present the Lord Chief Justice (Lord Reading), the Solicitor-General (Sir Ernest Pollock), Viscount Haldane, the Attorney-General (Sir Gordon Hewart), Lady Rhondda, Mrs. Fawcett, Miss Chrystal McMillan, who years before had voiced the claim of the Scottish women graduates to the right to vote for Parliamentary candidates representing Scottish universities, carrying her appeal even to the House of Lords, and others. The Lord Chancellor congratulated Mrs. Fawcett upon the success of her life-work: she was entitled, he said, to regard herself as driving in a victorious chariot over her victims. His experience in the Law Courts of the great ability shown by women as clerks indicated what might be expected from women now that they were admitted to the legal profession. He said he had done his best to persuade his young daughter that the Law was the career for her, but she persisted in wanting to be a movie artist. The chairman, Major Hills, said they proposed to create a fund which would enable women to read for the Bar who had not sufficient means to prosecute their legal studies. Over £150 was subscribed on the spot. Lord Reading said he eagerly

anticipated the time when he would have a woman advocate pleading in his Court. Miss Chrystal McMillan spoke in place of the Lord Advocate, who was unavoidably absent. Mrs. Thompson proposed the toast of the Bar.

The first woman called to the English Bar was Dr. Ivy Williams of the Inner Temple, who was a lecturer on Law at Oxford; she had, however, no intention of practising, preferring to continue her academic work. It was therefore left to Miss Monica Geikie Cobb, six months later, to be the first woman to hold a brief, which she did effectively, winning her maiden case at Birmingham Assizes. Mrs. Helena Normanton, who had been married in 1921, was called to the Bar in 1922, and was the first woman barrister to be briefed at the High Court of Justice in 1922, and at the Central Criminal Court in 1924. She also appeared in a great U.S.A. test case in 1925 which confirmed the right of married women to retain maiden surnames.

The President of the Law Society, discussing the appearance of women in the legal profession at the annual conference, said it might be questioned whether they had been equally successful in their efforts to attain success in the Law as they had been, for example, in medicine. No woman had attained any remarkable success as an advocate. There was no reason, however, why women should not succeed in either branch of the Law. They were already to be found among our legislators. Their type of mind, their industry and their experience enabled them to fulfil duties, especially in social legislation, with more zeal and possibly greater effect than men achieved. In that direction they had done and might continue to do great good to the country.

It may be interesting to note a few of the women



MISS MARIE LLOYD

*Facing page 166*



MISS SYBIL THORNDIKE



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who are choosing the Law as a profession. Nancy Gover, after obtaining a First in three successive years for Criminal, Common and Constitutional Law, was called to the Bar at the Middle Temple in January, 1927. Gladys Chittam, who married Mr. Dapho Powell, a barrister, was also called to the Bar at the Middle Temple. They were the first husband and wife to qualify as barristers at the English Bar. May Williams was called in 1927, when she was only twenty-one.

Lady Ankaret Jackson, who also is the wife of a barrister, and Baroness Clifton are two who have been more recently called. By 1929 nearly a hundred women had been called, among whom was Sophy Sanger, who for nearly five years had been employed at the International Labour Office of the League of Nations.

Quite recently, and for the first time in the history of the legal profession of England, a husband and wife appeared together as junior counsel in the High Court: Mr. William Morrison, M.C., and his wife, Mrs. Edith Morrison, who were called on the same night in 1923, the husband at the Inner Temple and the wife at Gray's Inn. They appeared jointly for one of two defendants sued for damages as the result of a collision between two taxi-cabs and a motor-car.

Miss C. M. Young and Miss Wheeler have successfully conducted Breach of Promise cases. Miss V. J. M. Stephenson was the first woman to be briefed to defend a murderer, and although unsuccessful, received much praise; Mrs. Normanton was the first to obtain a divorce for a client. Several women are in practice at the Chancery Bar and two at least at the Divorce Bar. Miss Margaret Kidd has appeared before the Law Lords and Miss Joan Clarkson before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

Of the women solicitors now in practice, Mrs. Crofts,



Miss Ingram, Miss Charlotte Beatty and Miss Carrie Morrison have come under favourable notice. Mrs. Crofts has published a valuable book upon the position of women under English Law. Miss Carrie Morrison is the senior woman solicitor of England and married her partner in 1929.

Many women barristers have begun to make their mark as writers upon legal subjects. Dr. Ivy Williams's book, "The Sources of the Swiss Constitution," is a prescribed text-book in London University; Miss Beroë Bicknell has published books on Constitutional Law and the Law of Infants. Miss Snow has assisted Sir Arthur Underhill in a book upon the new Law of Property and Mrs. Normanton has broken rather different ground in an edition in the Famous Trials series of the Norman Thorne murder case.

Not very long ago the lunches of the women solicitors were deemed of sufficient importance to occupy the attention of the Law Society at one of their meetings. There are now sixty-six women solicitors, of whom thirty-six are members of the Society, and Mr. Bell, their faithful champion, urged that the proper steps had not been taken for their comfort. "In the Common Room at lunch-time," he said, "there is no table reserved for our fair sisters. It has been observed that when a lady member comes in she looks around for a table at which one of her sisters may be sitting—and sometimes one is not available. It is within the knowledge of members that a lady may have to sit in a state of oppressed abstraction or suffused disconcertion. I urge that they should have tables to themselves. Let there be a bunch of flowers on the table. Place it adjacent to where the Masters sit. It would be an admirable education for both."

## VII

### SOME PROBLEMS THAT AFFECT WOMEN

A GREAT deal of controversy has raged round two problems of vital importance to women: Divorce and Birth Control. Women have made a great outcry for easier divorce, but are they always wise in trying to shake off the shackles of matrimony? Let us consider the matter. A small minority of married women want to be free from the brute to whom they are bound; life with him, they say, is intolerable. They lack the patience of their Victorian grandmothers, who endured not only the ordinary ills of matrimony, but the extraordinary, induced by the practically universal custom among men of over-indulgence in drink. In those days it was a matter of routine for the end of dinner to find a man under the table. Men boasted of the number of bottles they could imbibe, and those who preferred temperance were voted poor creatures. We have nothing of the sort now; public opinion forces no man to drink; for which we may be deeply thankful.

Then again the modern girl is seldom forced into an uncongenial marriage by her parents. She can generally choose for herself. Men and women meet on equal terms, and the freedom of their intercourse gives them plenty of opportunities to discover the defects of their prospective partners. When a girl cannot get on with her husband it is evident that the intuition upon which women pride themselves, generally with reason, has, in her case, been lacking. It is true that a girl

is sometimes forced into a marriage of which she is doubtful by the fear that she will be left on the shelf while all her friends are getting married. But that is an unnecessary fear; the unmarried woman of to-day is not despised but often envied for her freedom and independence. With careers of every kind open to her, a girl is not obliged to rely on matrimony for a living, and need not marry unless her heart prompts her. Having made her choice, a girl of character hesitates to publish the fact that she has been mistaken and does her best to keep her contract. She is aware that men, even the cleverest, are rather like children, and generally open to management. Good temper, a sense of humour and tact on the part of the wife, will make a success of almost any marriage; and when there are children how infinitely better it is for them if the parents make the best of a bad bargain and live together in peace, even if it is only an artificial peace, for that in time is quite likely to become genuine; as Mr. Max Beerbohm has made clear in his incomparable little masterpiece, "The Happy Hypocrite."

Furthermore, a woman who cannot put up with one husband is more than likely to find a second intolerable. It is very seldom that divorced persons are happy for long with their second choice. Two instances among many which have come under my notice, are typical. In one case a woman, unhappy with her first husband, was equally unhappy with her second, of whom she rid herself by running away with a pitying friend of mine. With middle age she has developed nerves, and my poor friend feels he is indeed expiating his part of the sin. Her daughter by her first husband has also been divorced; a not infrequent result of a mother's frailty. The second case began with a violent love affair between a married man and a married woman, who both quitted

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## *SOME PROBLEMS THAT AFFECT WOMEN*

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unusually good partners for the sake of their infatuation. Both were divorced, but before they were free to marry they had quarrelled irrevocably and parted; and now the man can only say of the one time object of his adoration: "That beastly woman who ruined me." In nothing is the old saying truer than in marriage: "Better the devil we know than the devil we don't know." My advice to couples about to divorce each other is emphatically "Don't; show your strength of character by making the best of it." I was struck by the remark of a woman who had just left hospital after two terrible operations; she said she had been quite happy there and would not mind if she had to go back; "It's what you make of it," she said philosophically; as a matter of fact she had been the life of her ward, always ready with a joke, and much of the time this could have been none too easy.

I see that a certain judge in America, reputed to have a wide experience of the troubles of young people, advocates the companionate marriage as a solution of conjugal difficulties and sexual entanglements which are particularly rife in the States. His plea is really for birth control and easy divorce without any necessary obligation on the part of the man to pay alimony. This would naturally please men; they would have all the benefits of matrimony without any of its responsibilities. But the woman would suffer; with each temporary union her value in the marriage market would decrease. The best men will always prefer a woman who comes to them pure; they do not want another man's leavings. In a moment of infatuation they may be ready to forgive and make allowance; but when their passion has cooled their respect for the woman will diminish, and in all probability their love for her will not be able to stand the strain. Every



man deep in his heart has an ideal of womanhood, and he will not have a lasting feeling for a woman who has made herself cheap. The modern novelist may support free love either as an excuse for his own vagaries or because it is a sensational subject and he wants to sell his books, but no one who has the true interests of woman at heart could suggest it. With every fresh lover a woman sinks in the social scale, and the day will come when she is the huntress and her quarry will elude her; with middle age will come the consciousness that she has made a horrible mess of her life. There can be no doubt that for woman not only the right but the wise course is to keep herself inviolate until she meets the man who has so high an opinion of her that he would not dream of taking her without marriage, and whose love is based on a respect that will keep him true to her through the whole of her life. This is the only sort of union that is worth while.

What of the children of a companionate marriage, for slips will occur even with the practice of birth control, or of the unmarried woman who thinks she has a right to be a mother, or of the couple seeking divorce? Unhappy little things; no wonder such children generally turn out badly. What woman with any sort of heart who has heard a small boy say, beaming with pride and happiness: "My daddy can do that," or "You should see *my* daddy," could ever deprive her little son of his father. It is a crime to bring children into the world unless you are prepared to give them a happy home, and in the making of that home a woman must be ready to sink many of her personal inclinations. Children are like husbands; they have their secret ideal of motherhood, and it hurts them horribly, a great deal more than many parents realize, when their mother is unjust or unkind or loses



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her temper. The trust and love of a little child is a most beautiful thing, worth any sacrifice; and in after years how great is the solace of loving children.

And with the coming of the companionate marriage would vanish that crowning day in a young girl's life, her wedding day; the day on which she is the centre of the picture, and a very beautiful picture it often is in these days of pageant weddings. She must lose the excitements of her trousseau, of choosing the bridesmaids' dresses, of receiving presents by every post. For what circle of relatives and friends, however devoted, would be willing to repeat all the fuss an indefinite number of times for one girl? It would be quite impossible; there would be weddings every day of the week. The companionate marriage would have to take place at a registry office, and the wedding pageant which affords pleasure not only to the bride's own circle, but to an innumerable number of onlookers, to say nothing of forming one of the chief attractions of newspaper pictures, would vanish from modern life. Would any girls advocate this? Certainly not the majority.

A speaker at the Eugenics Society recently urged that the engagement affords the opportunity to both man and girl for becoming acquainted with each other's personality, and if the two are suited, loyalty after marriage will follow naturally. The girl of to-day is healthier mentally and physically than the girl of the nineties, but she lacks a quality on which those who preceded her had reason to pride themselves, stamina, and the courage to persist in the face of difficulties. Few realize that marriage is a contract with obligations they have mutually agreed to undertake. Easier divorce has lowered the standard of marriage and induces couples who for the sake of the children might

have been inclined to make the best of things, to rush to get a divorce instead of giving themselves time to think the matter over. A large proportion of divorces are glaring examples of impetuosity and lack of stability, and are granted chiefly to those to whom money is no object, and who are wanting in common sense and an appreciation of moral responsibility.

In England prior to 1857, a divorce could only be obtained by the tedious and costly method of an Act of Parliament, and was therefore only available for the wealthy. The Matrimonial Causes Act which was passed in this year, opened the way to an easier method but was still too expensive for the vast majority. Under it a man might divorce his wife for a single act of infidelity, but a wife was obliged to prove in addition an act of cruelty. Statistics of crime show as many as 1,500 assaults by husbands on wives in the course of one year.

The first statute of importance which affected the civil position of women was the Married Woman's Property Act, drafted by Dr. Pankhurst and the result of an agitation of nearly thirty years. Every one of the early Suffragists helped to secure the passing of this Act in 1882. Any real or personal property belonging to a married woman or acquired by her was henceforth her own to hold and dispose of in any manner she liked; all wages, earnings, money and property gained by her in the course of trade or by the exercise of her profession was included.

In 1885 the Criminal Law Amendment Act to improve the law relating to the protection of women and girls against sexual offences was passed as a result of the efforts of a committee which had been formed in 1845.

In 1886 by the Guardianship of Infants Act a mother

HOLIDAY FASHIONS IN 1909

MISS MARIE TEMPEST







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was allowed to act as guardian to her own children. In earlier days the father had "the control over the person, education and conduct of his children until they are twenty-one." There was a case of a mother who in her will appointed a suitable guardian for her son, but the appointment was void because the father alone had power to appoint a testamentary guardian. "And the infant being of his age fourteen chose a guardian in Court." In another case a father, having left his wife for another woman, insisted on his right to take the three children of his marriage, the eldest of whom was five years old, away from their mother to live with him and his mistress. This state of injustice had endured for over two hundred years before it was amended.

In 1909 a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the divorce laws and recommended an extension of the right to sue for release, but it was not until 1923 that the Matrimonial Causes Act gave woman the right to obtain divorce for the same cause as a man.

In 1927 the number of divorces in this country reached a larger total than ever before in our history, except in the post-war year, 1921. The Archbishop of York declared there was a great tide of restlessness and instability of nerves, as well as passion, forcing itself up against the barriers with which the sanctity of marriage had hitherto been preserved. The steady decline in the birth-rate meant a great and growing indulgence in certain instincts without regard to the responsibilities which are justly attached to them. The application of mechanical science to motion was working a veritable revolution in our midst in the habits, temperaments and outlook of our people.

Various Separation and Maintenance Acts were



passed between 1895 and 1925 which establish the wife's right to maintenance; she even has the power to pledge her husband's credit for necessities; and very often in actions of debt for necessities supplied to married women living apart from their husbands under agreements for maintenance, this liability of the husband has been found to depend upon an inquiry whether the husband had paid as agreed; but Lord Mansfield decided that "If upon separation the husband agrees to make her a sufficient allowance, and pays it, the husband is not liable."

In June, 1928, the full Court of Appeal gave judgment upon an important point in divorce law, holding that a wife has a right to ask for permanent maintenance, even though before divorcing her husband she had entered into a deed of separation agreeing not to ask for alimony greater than that provided for in the deed. A wife who received a divorce was entitled to have her alimony determined by the Court, which could consider not merely the means of the parties but their conduct.

There was rather an amusing anomaly in a recent divorce case. After hearing the evidence the judge said the jury would have to consider very carefully whether the wife were not absolutely worthless. A very few minutes' deliberation were required by the jury before they passed their verdict, awarding the husband £10,000 damages for the loss of his wife.

Sir Evelyn Cecil expressed the view that a reported increase in the number of divorce cases is due to the law making the grounds for divorce the same for husband and wife and not to secrecy under the new Act prohibiting the publication of reports. Sir Evelyn, who was the author of the Regulation of Reports Bill, said no statistics were yet available to show the working

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of the Act in regard to its effect on the number of divorces. Even if divorces have increased, the good reasons, he said, were : (1) The poor person's procedure is very much cheaper, and many people have availed themselves of it; (2) Divorce cases can now be tried in eleven Assize Courts, whereas formerly all had to come to London, and (3) and most important reason, the grounds of divorce are now the same for husband and wife. In 1928 for the first time the petitions by women exceeded those by men.

A wife who was entitled under a separation deed to a weekly allowance for life, later proved in the bankruptcy of her husband for the estimated capital value of the weekly payments, and received a dividend out of the estate. The husband subsequently obtained his discharge. The Court held that the husband was not relieved from his Common Law liability and that the wife was entitled to maintenance; an undischarged bankrupt was similarly liable on adjudication.

A wife recently sought to enforce against her husband a maintenance order which the magistrate said was monstrously high in the circumstances. The husband only earned £2 18s. a week, out of which he agreed to give his wife 25s., but she said she must have 30s. "I won't enforce it or enable you to get it," said the magistrate.

A Lambeth magistrate declared : "A husband has no right to chastise his wife. She has ceased to be a chattel to be dealt with as a man thinks fit. She now stands as an independent person with her own right. In certain circumstances a wife may even obtain an injunction to prevent her husband trespassing in her house."

Professor Montgomery, in a lecture on English Law, declared that a married woman nowadays has more

rights than her husband; not only might her civil wrongdoing before marriage fall on the hapless man, but her liability to strangers in the way of contract is limited to her separate estate, and some of her crimes might be imputed to the concern of her husband. Yet she is his political equal and could follow him secretly to his place of business and cancel his Parliamentary vote. "The married woman," the Professor concluded, "is the spoilt darling of the English Law." In fact, as was recently pointed out in the Press, the indiscretions of a wife's tongue are a husband's legal burden, and the Law makes him responsible for her income tax. She may earn a thousand and her husband but a third of that amount, yet it is the husband who can be caught by the tax collector should she not pay what is due. As for maintenance, a husband has no redress against a shiftless wife, but a shiftless husband can be brought to Court. For the guardianship of her children a woman can go to a magistrate, but a man is obliged to appeal to the High Court, a far more expensive affair.

Lord Astor brought in a Bill to abolish the special privileges and restrictions of married women and grant them the same legal status as other adults. It also sought to prevent dependent wives and children from being left destitute by a testator.

In August, 1928, The Prohibited Degrees of Relationship Bill was defeated in the final stage of the third Reading by one vote, after the Archbishop of Canterbury had made it the theme of his last speech in the House of Lords. He said in conclusion: "I have been thirty-four years a member of this House, and during that time I have given all the attention that my powers admitted to questions of social life and morality. This is presumably the last time I shall have

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an opportunity of standing here as the representative spokesman of those of us whose life has been spent in dealing with social and domestic questions in the homes of England on moral considerations, and I want to make an appeal against hasty legislation in this matter." Lord Wraxhall, the sponsor of the Bill in the Lords, pleaded that it merely followed up the Deceased Wife's Sister Act, but it was pointed out to him that the promoters of the 1907 Act repudiated the idea that any extension was contemplated. Lord Merivale, the President of the Divorce Court, denounced it as a proposal made in the interests of a small body of persistent people who wished their breaches of the Law to be sanctioned by an amendment of the Law which would practically destroy the law of affinity. "I do not believe," he concluded, "that your lordships contemplate a revolution in the family life of the country." Lord Cushenden argued that if the Bill passed, no man who had nieces by marriage, whom he probably regarded as his own, could regard them any longer in that light, and those who were widowers would find it impossible to ask young nieces to stay with them as they did now without the slightest reserve, if there were the feeling that such nieces were eligible to become wives. "You are going to introduce poison into a great many households if you pass this unconsidered Bill."

At a Reading at the Middle Temple there was a discussion on what relief was open to an English wife in England against an Indian husband domiciled in India; she could not get a divorce or a judicial separation. The Reader suggested as remedial legislation that conditions might be imposed prohibiting such marriages if the husband already had a wife living, and prohibiting the husband from marrying a second



time while his marriage with the English woman still subsisted. Such restrictions, he said, would be in conformity with modern developments in India, where there was a growing tendency against polygamy; in Turkey it was now actually forbidden.

A Bill "To Prevent Refusal to Employ Women in the Public Services by Reason only of their Being Married" was recently discussed in the House of Commons and brought forth from Lady Astor the vivacious assertion: "The more I see of public life the more I care for home life." The fate of the Bill was sealed by the opposition of an ardent Suffragist, who declared that it would swell the sickness list of every office in which women were employed.

Lord Parmoor recently brought forward a "Traffic in Women Bill" to make "The obtaining of women by conspiracy, fraud or intimidation," punishable with penal servitude for seven, and in its worst form, for ten years, and the habitual use of premises for certain purposes punishable with imprisonment sometimes accompanied by hard labour. It contained other drastic provisions for the suppression of vice, including a term of five years' imprisonment and a fine of £500 for living on the immoral earnings of a woman.

These are a few examples of the innumerable Bills, Acts and Amendments that have been brought forward for the benefit of women during the last fifty years, and have enormously improved her position, but there are still some grievances to be redressed, as Mrs. Corbet Ashley pointed out at the British Commonwealth League Conference; she moved a resolution stating there was a strong demand that the Law should give a woman the same right as a man to retain or change her nationality. She also complained that no woman has the right to sit in the House of Lords, nor



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are women allowed in the Consular and Diplomatic services.

One grievance the modern married woman still labours under, and that is the income tax. Why should her hard earned professional income be added to her husband's and taxed accordingly? If she were single she would have to pay much less, possibly nothing at all. It is very hard on those women who, in order to give their children the benefit of a good education, work hard at a profession instead of spending their lives in pleasant leisure. The Chancellor of the Exchequer should go behind the scenes. A parents' day at one of the great City schools might be illuminating: women in last year's hats, mended gloves and pitiful attempts at finery, eagerly talking of their hopes of getting their boys to Oxford or Cambridge or into professions. Women such as these try to supplement the family income in all sorts of laborious ways. Is it fair to tax their earnings so heavily? The average wife of the professional or middle-class man with children to be educated is one of the most hard-working, unselfish creatures in existence.

Mr. Justice McCardie gave it as his opinion recently that actions for breach of promise are regarded by many people as indicative of a woman's sense of inferiority to man; it is an undignified gesture in modern conditions. When women were economically dependent it may have been necessary, but in an age when woman claims economic equality it is nothing better than an anachronism. It is unflattering to the female sex, he continued, for it is based on the assumption that in a contract of marriage man has inestimable benefits to confer and woman to receive. If the contract is broken the woman suffers the loss

of matrimonial prospects, an injury demanding reparation, which is quite inconsistent in these days of sex equality. However, he concluded, woman now is not as eager as she was to put a money value on her outraged affections, and is less ready to claim damages.

As for birth control this is one of the chief problems of the modern world. An American woman, Mrs. Margaret Sanger, who has taken a prominent part in promoting the movement for birth control in the United States of America, organized a conference on the subject at Geneva, but the scientists she invited fought shy of the practical side of the subject and wandered off into abstract speculations. One professor dilated on experiments made with the *Drosophila melanogaster* fly, which, by the aid of mathematical formulæ, he averred solved the human problem by "a logistic curve." After many digressions the conference came to the conclusion with which they closed the meeting, that the question of conscious regulation of the growth of the world's population must ultimately be faced.

In the good old days people were free to choose in what country they would make their home; this is no longer the case; restriction of migration is becoming universal, and when the population of a country outgrows its means of maintenance it is exceedingly difficult to find an outlet for it. The United States of America is still willing to admit a good many immigrants from the north of Europe but will take few from Southern Europe and none from Asia. Italy, where the growth of population is encouraged by Mussolini and the Pope, is therefore at a loss, especially as European countries have set up barriers against one another. The Asiatic problem, too, is of special importance in connection with the birth-rate. The Japanese population is increasing with great rapidity, and so is its military and naval



A HIGH DIVE (1929)



BATHING BELLES TWENTY YEARS AGO



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strength. It is compelled to seek an outlet for its surplus people. China and India too, which together contain nearly half the population of the world, are trying to live on insufficient resources and are debarred to any considerable extent from other countries. Although India is a part of the British Empire Indians are not allowed free entry into the Dominions, and South Africa is spending considerable sums of money to send Indians, even those born in South Africa, back to India. Australia and Canada refuse to take industrial failures from the Mother Country. The hope of solving the migration problem where different nationalities are concerned is small. Yet as Mr. Albert Thomas said at a recent conference: "The question is one of peace or war. If no action is taken fresh wars will break out at no distant date." And Professor Leonard Hill summed up: "A wise control of the birth-rate throughout mankind is essential. Unless the propagation of the human race is regulated by human reason rather than by animal instinct world conflicts are inevitable." But if the white races follow this wise counsel and practise birth control have they any guarantee that the coloured races will follow suit; and if not, now that education is spreading so widely in Asia, will not fresh dangers arise of a far more terrible character?

But at all events many people are beginning to fear that the world will soon be too small for the population and make an outcry for birth control; this fear is fostered by novelists in England, France, Germany and the United States of America, eager for sensation, who present lurid pictures of a world with uncontrolled production. But is that fear really justified? Has not Nature some subtle power of adapting the populations of the earth to their environment? Is birth control



always voluntary? It is very difficult to find out the actual statistics but some are obvious. Let us take Holland; it is unlikely that there is any country in the world where birth control is more widely practised. The first birth control clinic was privately instituted in 1885, and now in all the cities there are clinics under the control of the Dutch Neo-Malthusian League, which was granted a Royal Charter of Public Utility in 1895, and is recognized by the Dutch Government; and yet the birth-rate of Holland is 23·8, which is considerably higher than that of Germany, France, England or the United States of America. In the past six years our birth-rate has dropped by over twenty-seven per cent.; it is now the lowest in Europe with the exception of Sweden; even in France more babies are born, and every evidence seems to show that it is a permanent feature, not a passing phenomenon. In 1913 our birth-rate was 24·1; in 1927 it was the lowest recorded, 16·7 per thousand. In 1926 the actual number of births was less than in 1860, when the population of England and Wales was half that at present. It is curious that although our total population increased by nearly ten millions in the thirty years between 1891 and 1921, yet the number of children under fifteen years of age remained almost stationary; since 1921 there has been an appreciable decline, and in 1926 the number of children under fifteen was less than in 1921. The great increase in population is due to the reduced death-rate.

It is commonly supposed that the fall in the birth-rate is due to birth control, but everyone does not agree with restriction yet the average family of to-day is no longer nine or ten as it was fifty years ago, but three or four, and often only one or two. When our forefathers went out in the *Mayflower* to colonize America and a white population was in great request,

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their families averaged twenty and twenty-two. I was recently helping a friend to work out her family tree and was interested to see that the size of the families involved was usually nine and ten, and often fourteen during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The decline in the size of families began among the aristocracy, the middle classes followed suit and their example has been followed by the upper artisan class. It is only the slum dwellers who continue to produce many children, and as they gradually rise in the social scale their numbers decrease. The change may to some extent be the result of birth control but when we consider the precision and perseverance required in its practice it seems doubtful if some of the heedless young couples of to-day are voluntarily limiting the number of their offspring. The Fabian Society once sent out a questionnaire to 316 persons; 242 used restrictive measures and 74 did not. The average number of children in the first case was 2·7, and in the second 2·88. A similar official inquiry revealed that among a certain number who used restrictive measures the average number was 2·4.

The falling birth-rate occupied the attention of the members of the British Medical Association at a meeting in Cardiff. Sir Thomas Horder said that unfortunately a fall in quantity was wont to cause a fall in quality, but admitted the difficulty of securing a regulation of births between the different social grades in a country. Dr. Crewe said that undoubtedly contraception was widely attempted among the middle and upper classes, but unless it could be shown beyond all reasonable doubt that the methods were effectual it could not be accepted that birth control was entirely responsible for the fall in the birth-rate. It certainly had affected the marriage rate, in that a faith in con-

traceptive methods had caused this to rise, but such records as there were seemed to show that this faith was too often misplaced. It was probable many of the methods led to late and permanent infecundity, but it was very doubtful indeed that birth control had affected the crude birth-rate. The fall had been too gentle and accomplished with evolutionary steadiness. He said it seemed to be the case that conscious and deliberate limitation of fertility had been and was practised mainly by the socially relatively successful, that was by the inherently relatively infecund. If that was so then it had prevented fewer conceptions than it would have done had it been employed by the socially relatively unsuccessful. Another speaker gloomily contended that it was the unfortunate economic conditions of the country which were to blame. Some discussion followed in regard to a eugenic adjustment of marriage which was terminated by Dr. Letitia Fairfield's witty comment that woman was neither a mouse nor a goldfish; a fact which eugenists were apt to forget.

The great apostle of birth control is of course Dr. Marie Stopes; there is no detail of the physical side of marriage which she has not discussed exhaustively in her various books; it certainly will not be her fault if anyone remains in ignorance of the meaning of marriage. Shops now advertise contraceptive measures, and probably derive considerable profit.

The opinion of Dr. Scharlieb, wisest of woman doctors, delivered at a large women's meeting, is that most contraceptive methods are hurtful, if not immediately, in the long run, resulting in diseased nerves, hysteria and other evils, and often in permanent infecundity. She said she knew many cases of women who had denied themselves a child in the early days

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of their marriage and afterwards vainly and desperately sought for motherhood. Dr. Scharlieb's view is that the only safe method is voluntary continence at certain periods, but she advocated going out into the wide spaces of the Empire for those who could not make a living for their family at home.

A memorandum from the National Conference of Employers' Organizations makes it clear that the great mass of employers in this country are opposed to the proposed raising of the school leaving age in 1932, from fourteen to fifteen; the chief reason being that in the near future a shortage of juvenile labour is expected as a result of the low birth-rate of recent years; this, it states, would be accentuated by the removal of the whole year group of some 257,000 children from the labour market; they think there will be a steady diminution up to 1931, which will be more marked in 1932, and reach its lowest point in 1933, when they think there will be 419,000 less children than in 1927.

It is a matter for alarm that the feeble-minded are prolific, producing in large numbers the feeble-minded offspring who are such a menace to the moral, mental and physical growth of the nation. Strong disapproval of the marriage of persons mentally defective was expressed by the Lunacy Board of Control in their report for 1927; it was suggested that steps should be taken to make illegal the marriage of all persons who are subject to orders in lunacy. The marriage of defectives has disastrous consequences to the community, and the time has come when definite legislative steps should be taken to prevent it. The environment created by mentally defective parents cannot fail to intensify any innate weakness in their children; many will develop criminal tendencies. It seems as if to



advocate the sterilization of the unfit should be one of the crusades of women.

A commission has recently been appointed to inquire into the law and practice regarding offences against the criminal law, viz., prostitution and soliciting. Its inception, Sir William Joynson Hicks declared, was "the outcome of certain women's deputations to me many months ago," and prior to the late police cases. Five women have been included on this commission: Miss Margery Fry, J.P., Lady Joynson Hicks, Miss Kelly, J.P., Bailie Mrs. Morison Millar and the Hon. Mrs. Wilson Fox. In giving evidence an ex-policewoman of Edinburgh thought the law should be altered so that men and women should be treated equally for such offences as soliciting. Miss Chrystal McMillan maintained that annoyance should be proved by the person annoyed. She objected to the charge of "soliciting or importuning for immoral purposes" because that constituted the police arbiters of morals. The secretary of the National Vigilance Association said there had been a great improvement in the conditions of the streets in recent years largely owing to the enforcing of the laws against solicitation. He said he would like to see a greater number of women police not to make arrests but to use moral suasion with young women; "but I would dress them as women police not as men police." Lady Emmott, on behalf of the National Council of Women, declared the law as at present administered was very unfair because it left the amateur practically untouched, and solicitation should only be made a penal offence when it was accompanied by a proof of annoyance, for "we are very dissatisfied with the way in which evidence in those cases is now given in Court."

It appears that in twenty years convictions for street



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offences in Liverpool have fallen from 1,772 to 316. The stipendiary magistrate commented that this seemed common to the whole country and was probably due partly to improved morals and improved streets, and partly to the diminution in the hours of licensed houses. The Chief Constable, giving evidence before the committee, said there was, however, a great deal of laxer behaviour. "The flighty girl is out to get all she can in the way of thorough enjoyment at the expense of any young fellow or man she comes across." He thought the old type of prostitute was disappearing in favour of a more "respectable" type who lived in a flat. In the dock areas soliciting and immoral houses were practically unheard of because most of the population was Irish and consequently Roman Catholic.

The Chief Constable of Edinburgh thought that if prostitutes were driven off the streets there would be a danger to respectable women.

We may, however, be congratulated on the fact that it is the general opinion of those who trade in women that the Englishwoman is too independent to make a good prostitute; and the old argument that the preservation of brothels tends to the public health is refuted by recent research.

## VIII

### DRESS AND SOCIETY

THE twentieth century has released women from an intolerable thralldom in dress. Looking back we middle-aged women wonder how we ever endured the tight-lacing that was considered an essential feature of Victorian days, or prided ourselves on our ability to compress our waists into the fashionable eighteen inches, feeling mortified if twenty were our limit. The wasplike figure that excited general admiration was not achieved without considerable effort and perseverance; bit by bit corsets were tightened, and a bedpost was sometimes called into requisition. Not unnaturally girls were often unwell, and had to "lie down"; nervous headaches abounded and attacks of faintness were frequent; sometimes a brave doctor would diagnose "tight-lacing," but without result. It seems a marvel that so many girls survived. After those long years of discomfort how we rejoice in that most comfortable of envelopes, the corselet, which confines our sagging curves without restriction. Many blessings have been invoked on the head of the inventor.

Another terrible discomfort was the long skirt that in some years had the addition of a train even in the morning, and never failed to touch the ground; it swept up the dust to the detriment of under-garments, and only too frequently the braid with which the bottom of it was necessarily reinforced, wore out and



ASCOT FASHIONS IN 1912



AT GOODWOOD TWENTY YEARS AGO



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required to be replaced, or at the most critical moments, getting adrift, would catch round a heel and cause a loss of dignity. On wet days the difficulties were heightened, and an attempt to hold up the skirt was complicated by the voluminous moreen and tenacious red petticoats which it covered.

Another atrocity was the bustle, a contraption stiffened with whalebone that stretched in increasing semi-circles from the waist to the bottom of the skirt, to give a smart "sit" to the back of the dress, but unless it were adjusted to a nicety the "sit" had the opposite effect. This fashion endured for a long time; it was an offshoot of that greater abomination, the crinoline; and to make the wasp-like waist appear still more slender, balloon sleeves at one time grew to enormous dimensions. In those days dressmakers loved "bones," and every one of the innumerable seams of our bodices was stiffened with a piece of whalebone. Even our collar-bands were similarly stiffened to a height of three or four inches, making a movement of the chin painful.

Hats were another form of torture; at one time even the most proper and prim little person wore an enormous erection, covered with artificial flowers of startling hue, loops of ribbon stiffened with wire, and jet or paste buckles, the whole weighing a considerable amount, and requiring to be perched at the correct angle on the top of a structure of plaits or coils. How difficult it was to preserve the smart angle when a gust of wind came, none but those who suffered can tell, nor of the giant hatpins that were a menace to a neighbour. Then there was the hard sailor hat; how pretty some of us must have been, to have appeared attractive in it. One school, I see, is sufficiently misguided to retain this relic of a bad past. We had



veils to add to our troubles, sometimes with a pattern that obscured the features; the arrangement of this veil over our large hats was an arduous business, and unless we were natty with our fingers the effect was uninspiring.

It is wonderful that women allowed these vagaries of fashion to govern them for so long; we were still in the toils of the long skirt at the beginning of the War, and very few had discarded the boned neckband. The War freed us; we were too busy with essential work to be able to stop and adjust a long dress, perch a hat at the right angle, or build up a structure of coils and plaits, to say nothing of curling a large fringe. A job was waiting to be done, everything else had to go, and our skirts became shorter and shorter, our hats less and less trimmed, our veils vanished, our hair we couldn't do with at all, off it had to come, and we emerged like a butterfly from a chrysalis into the sunshine of a freedom which we shall never relinquish. "The freedom you have got with regard to dress is worth the vote a hundred times over," Sir Alfred Hopkinson said to the assembled girls at Cheltenham Ladies' College on a recent Speech Day. Contrast the girl of to-day with her thin, light silken garments—artificial silk has all the essential qualities of the more expensive fabric—that fit her comfortably, leaving her limbs free and her throat bare for the sun and air to maintain her in health, with her tight-laced, boned and bustled ancestor. Can the male sex wonder that we sometimes run a little amok, like young colts let out into the green fields; it is in all innocence that we occasionally wear our dresses a little too short, not because of our ingrained sexuality as Professor Freud would suggest. However, as we have such critics careless girls must beware lest the indifference of a shop

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assistant causes them to appear in a garment scandalously skimpy. Some girls unfortunately wear any garment the shops force upon them. An earnest undergraduate too much absorbed in her studies to take proper care of her appearance, and wearing a somewhat meagre frock, entered a room unexpectedly where her tutor, who had been travelling abroad for a year, was seated on a humpty. She was much confused by the greeting: "What, Miss Dash, and in tights!"

It is not the first time in the history of England that the austere have been similarly scandalized; an Act had to be passed in the time of Edward IV to the effect that: "All persons not of noble rank are prohibited from wearing garments of indecent brevity." In Italy and Belgium the critics are even more severe. One of our young Oxford Dons was recently travelling in Italy and happened to be alone in a railway carriage one night. She was awakened by a railway official tugging at her skirt with the stern reproof: "Garment too short"; and not long ago a Royal princess in Belgium received a polite hint in a clerical newspaper that she had worn "a too parsimoniously measured frock." So long as skirts are short, hair will be short; this was the pronouncement at the Hair-dressing Exhibition. Women are being encouraged to harmonize their hair-cut with their dress. One of the errors into which it is possible to fall was emphasized at a recent mannequin parade; a girl with an Eton crop appearing in a filmy picture dress, while a fluffy-headed damsel wore a masculine black satin dress.

Whatever may be said about modern fashions, at least there is no deception about them; they reveal rather than conceal. In Victorian days defects were camouflaged. Scanty locks were supplemented with bought tresses, an inflated appendage pinned inside

the bodice gave the impression of a sumptuous bosom, ugly legs hid behind sweeping trains, angles were softened by padding. It is only in cosmetics that we still seek artificial aid to heighten our charms, and there is certainly little concealment about the "pillar-box red" lips that some girls affect. It is not to be expected that woman will give up painting her face all at once; she has done it since the dawn of history and probably before. Among the recent treasure trove at Ur of the Chaldees—the oldest known civilization—there were found in the tomb of the Queen shells containing remnants of the paint with which she and her ladies ornamented their countenances. In every age and every land, China, Japan, Egypt, and among the most savage tribes, women have painted their faces. I do not know why they should consider it attractive; to the ordinary male mind the natural hues of health and youth have a charm which no amount of paint can produce, yet we see girls in their teens with artificially reddened lips—very badly done, too, for the most part. It is understandable that older women who have lost the charms they once possessed should touch themselves up. I have heard women say they do not feel dressed without some make-up, and artistically applied, it does add in a subdued light to a woman's faded attractions, but a healthy life would make her more attractive. For face "lifting" there seems small excuse, but it brings its own punishment.

Dress is an easy affair for the modern girl; very little material is required for one of the scanty frocks, and it can be run up very quickly. Patterns can be had which conduct the novice through every step of the process. The era of the "ready-made," too, is a boon to those who are not clever with their needle. At the beginning of the century the "ready-made"

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was of shoddy material, ugly cut and tawdry design, and suitable only for the stock figure. Now women of every age can buy tasteful, suitable garments in any size and at almost any price.

One of the greatest revolutions in dress is to be seen in the mackintosh or waterproof. The dark grey waterproofs sodden with rain, and the varnished black rubber variety that stuck together and had to be wrenched apart, in conjunction with the long skirt that flapped and dripped round the ankles, used in the Victorian era to make the dreariness of a wet day unspeakable. Now when it rains feather-weight mackintoshes blossom in the streets like flowers of brilliant hue, natty little hats to match preclude the need of an umbrella, and even waterproof shoes join in the riot of colour. There are still further developments of the waterproof: lovely painted silken cloaks suitable to wear over a dainty Ascot dress, and hats which have all the appearance of a light summer creation. The bathing costume has gone through a similar evolution, from the hideous, shapeless navy serge garment trimmed with red or white braid, to the elegant confection of to-day.

In mourning garments there has been a complete revolution. Heavy capes, widows' caps and veils, weepers, black-bordered handkerchiefs and black kid gloves, are things of the past. The most broken-hearted widow can scarcely be distinguished from the ordinary population. Some bereaved persons continue in their ordinary attire and the fact provokes little comment. The private mourning worn by Royal ladies is considerably lighter than would have been the case a few years ago; they now use filmy stuffs which once would not have been considered mourning.

Women's dress has certainly advanced enormously



in taste, in comfort, in health and in smart appearance. The light stockings that have to be washed every day are far more sanitary than the black woollen ones that did not show the results of use, and if a girl's legs are pretty how charming they look in their long light casings. The regulation garb of the big schools has a smart appearance, and many of our working-class mothers wear pretty overalls and caps to match that keep them neat and clean. Girls want more clothes than they did, but they earn more money and can afford them. The opinion recently expressed by our young dress dictator, Norman Hartnell, was : " English women are dressing better each season : their preference is for simple, well-cut and well-made dresses ; they avoid the bizarre and conspicuous, and they are more sensible in their shopping ; they buy frocks for the races and gala garden parties which are quite suitable for informal occasions in the evening."

Tappé, the leading New York couturier, mournfully prophesied in 1927 that in another ten years women will dress as simply as men, declaring that " the smart thing to-day is to eliminate, not to embellish." Since that dictum was pronounced wedding garments have revived mediaeval magnificence, and insidious elaborations of dance and evening dresses have crept in ; they tend to become too much flounced, to be set about with yards and yards of tulle and bunches of ornament, sashes and the like, in unexpected places. To be effective a dress of this sort must be exquisitely arranged, and when an attempt to copy it is made by the less expert the result is disastrous rather than beautiful. The uneven hem has pitfalls for the unwary, and when there is a long dip of some transparent material the effect is apt to be ludicrous. Simple fashions suit the average woman best, and she realizes this in her every-





TENNIS CHAMPION TWENTY-ONE YEARS AGO



WHEN HOBBLE SKIRTS WERE WORN



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day wear; the sports frock remains true to the simple outline.

Sport has produced a remarkable effect on the fashions, and it is said that golf saved the tweed industry. Changes in fashion certainly affect unemployment. The shortening of the skirt resulted in many idle looms in the Bradford and other manufacturing districts, but created a considerable amount of employment in the hosiery trade of Nottingham and Leicester. Sir Edwin Stockton stated not long ago that there are now large numbers of people with improved taste, and the better article often found the readiest market. The "rag and shoddy trade" he said has been practically killed by the artificial silk industry, because women wanted something better which they could get almost as cheaply.

It is curious that the best dress designers are generally men. Norman Hartnell, for instance, has an extraordinary flair for woman's dress; his designs won the first three prizes at a pageant of Fair Women; the first prize was for a bride's dress, which has been put away in the London museum for exhibition in 1960. The fortunate bride for whom it was designed wore it afterwards in the evenings at a noted Highland hotel, and was known as "the girl with the lovely wedding-dress." It is gratifying to have a unique garment, for sometimes in these days of mass production the tragedy of duplication occurs, as it did at Ascot not long ago, when three of the smartest women turned up in the same identical dress.

Another popular dress designer is Captain Philips, an Oxford man. He gives advice to women as to their dress, and undertakes to find for them garments that exactly suit them. These men dictators are held in high esteem: Tappé, the New York couturier, was once

invited by Lady Paget to one of her smart parties, to the undisguised disgust of an American guest, who said she had never expected to be asked to meet her milliner. Lady Paget smiled sweetly : " To you, my dear, Tappé is a milliner. To me he is an artist."

The vogue for bare backs at balls and similar festivities has caused women to devote considerable attention and beauty culture to this portion of their anatomy. How history repeats itself ; who would guess, but for one allusion, that the following words were written ninety years ago, and by no less a person than William Hazlitt : " Our belles formerly overloaded themselves with dress, of late years they have affected to go almost naked. . . . The women have left off stays. . . . The monstrous pretensions to distinctions in dress have dwindled away by tacit consent, and the simplest and most graceful have been in the same request with all classes. The ideas of natural equality and the Manchester steam engines together have like a double battery levelled the high towers and artificial structures of fashion in dress."

We scarcely realize the vast change for the better that has gradually come about in Society until we happen upon something like a letter that was written in the eighteenth century by the haughty Duchess of Buckingham to Lady Huntingdon. She had consented to hear Whitefield preach and thus expressed her opinion : " I thank your ladyship for the information concerning the Methodist preachers. Their doctrines are most repulsive and strongly tinged with impertinence and disrespect towards their superiors, in perpetually endeavouring to level all ranks and do away with all distinctions. It is monstrous to be told that you have a heart as sinful as the common wretches that crawl the earth. . . . This is highly offensive and



insulting, and I cannot but wonder that your ladyship should relish any sentiments so much at variance with high rank and good breeding."

Our Royal Family, with their simple, kindly ways and unfailing interest in the welfare of every section of the community, have broken down most of the barriers erected by etiquette between the classes, and the gain in friendly feeling has been enormous. When the Prince of Wales, for instance, goes to a sports club in the course of his travels throughout the Dominions, and a match between himself and the Governor or chief-in-command is suggested, he asks instead to see the club handicaps, and selects the player with a handicap similar to his own.

It used to be considered essential for Royal folk when they went to the theatre to occupy a box; now they often go in the stalls. They dine at restaurants and dance indefatigably at balls. During the War they worked side by side with all classes of persons in the friendliest fashion.

The example of the Royal Family is the most substantial bar that can be opposed to any shameless fashion. People are accustomed to respect dignity to the degree to which the Court itself respects it. An insufficiently-gowned lady was once escorted from a Court ball by the Chamberlain, acting on the King's order, "so that she might repair an unfortunate rent in her gown."

Presentation to the King and Queen is an enjoyable function; very different to what it was in 1857, when it involved so much hardship that the question of an immediate improvement in the really terrible conditions had to be raised in the House of Commons. The ceremony then took place in St. James's palace, and it was pointed out that 980 ladies, besides a number of



gentlemen, were packed into rooms that only held a couple of hundred in reasonable comfort. In those days the ladies' dresses were so voluminous that the cushions of the carriages often had to be removed before they could get in, and their feathers were so tall that unless they sat upon the woodwork their Court plumes would be broken by the roof of the carriage. The only access to the Throne Room at St. James's was through a long, narrow corridor which became densely packed with ladies who fought their way towards the "pen," where they had to wait until their turn came for presentation. There were several benches in this pen over which most people fell, as it was impossible to see in the crush. By the time the poor debutantes arrived in the Throne Room they were bruised and agitated, and their dresses crushed and torn. Leech was inspired to draw a caricature called the "Training School for Ladies about to appear at Court," in which they are being taught to jump forms, scramble under obstacles and even use their fists. When the presentation was over the girls and their mothers had to fight their way back through the same corridor, and arriving at the entrance and in all probability finding their carriage had been obliged to drive on, had to wait in an open shed, the accommodation provided for coachmen and footmen, and stand in their satin shoes on the soiled and often saturated matting that covered the flagstones. As a result of the agitation in the House of Commons a new front was built to Buckingham Palace, and the drawing-rooms were transferred thither. Later on the fashion changed from crinolines to long sweeping trains, but these the Lord Chamberlain was obliged to curtail from considerations of space.

The Courts are now held in the evening at nine-thirty, and the girls to be presented could arrive

comfortably after dinner; but in order to obtain a place in the Throne Room they prefer to dress early in the afternoon in their low gowns, Court feathers and trains, and drive in the Mall until the police allow their cars to queue up. The occupants of the first eighty cars achieve the Throne Room, which is indeed well worth the effort; it is a fine spectacle, Majesty enthroned in the gorgeous room surrounded by splendid uniforms and magnificent attendants. While the cars are waiting in the Mall crowds of interested people walk up and down peering into them to see the lovely frocks and the beauties who pass the time reading and sometimes playing cards.

Of all features of English social life Ascot changes least. The unwritten laws still linger that a woman must not smoke nor bet from the rails in the Royal Enclosure, and that the smallest win must be celebrated and the largest loss consoled by a visit to the tent where "champagne only" is served. It is curious that it is on the race-course that fashion reigns supreme: the Ascot frock has no rival, and if you want to know the style of tweed and cut of coat that will be fashionable in the coming winter, you must go to the paddock at Doncaster in September.

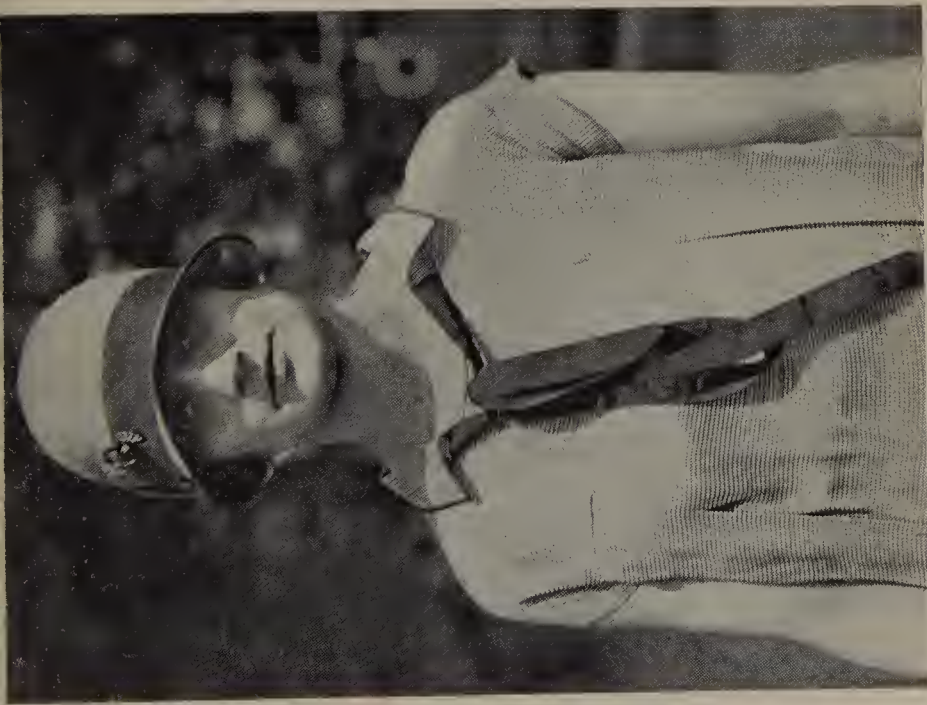
How many of the great houses, once celebrated for their magnificent hospitality, have passed into the shadows; Devonshire House and Grosvenor House have been demolished, Dorchester House is to follow suit, and in each case the site is to be covered with flats and offices; Stafford House is a museum, Spencer House is a ladies' club, and Montagu House a Government office. The saddest sight of all, I think, is Park Lane, that charming thoroughfare down which on a bright spring morning it was once a delight to stroll. Each house, whether a duke's, a millionaire's or a wealthy

commoner's, had an interesting individuality of its own. Now on the sites of the two most stately mansions there are huge blocks of characterless flats with monotonous rows of precisely similar windows that reach up to a dizzy height and dwarf the cheerful, bright and home-like dwelling-places near. The tenants appear remote, inaccessible, self-centred; many Society people, however, have had to seek refuge there from the trials incidental to the maintenance of a large establishment nowadays.

Society no longer lives only in the streets bounded by Park Lane and Berkeley Square; it has overflowed into Bayswater, Westminster and even Bloomsbury, once dedicated to the cheap boarding-house. The shops at Knightsbridge and in Sloane Street are as modish as in Bond Street, and Mayfair is gradually becoming the abode of commerce.

An aftermath of the War is to be seen in the rather curious fact that Society women seem to feel there must be some charitable excuse for any great festivity, and the result is that some truly gorgeous functions are devised for the benefit of specially deserving funds and organizations. This is all to the good: artistic talent is stimulated, the level of artistic achievement is raised, a large number of people are provided with a wholesome interest and the cause in question benefits considerably. The charity entertainments of 1927 in particular reached a high level of originality; they took the form of balls at great hotels or special matinées at theatres. The best of them was perhaps the *Bal des Étoiles*, organized by a popular leader of the young smart set, Mrs. Robin d'Erlanger; it included a dazzling pageant representing the Signs of the Zodiac, in which a large number of beautiful Society women took part. The Doll and Mannequin Ball was another huge success; it marked





MRS. ROBIN D'ERLANGER



THE DUCHESS OF YORK AND LADY PLUNKET





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the apex of the craze for dolls among Society women, which amused even the Duchess of York. Fifty fashionable beauties, headed by Lady Plunket, paraded as mannequins, and each carried a large doll a replica of herself. The dolls, which included one from the Queen and another from the Queen of Spain, were afterwards auctioned by Leslie Henson, and the popularity of each entrant could be measured by the price her replica fetched. The Princess Elizabeth Hostel benefited.

The Orthopædic Hospital was the object of the Bric-à-Brac Ball. Society women posed as *objets d'art* on a stage in the modern ballroom; Lady Diana Cooper was a Gothic Madonna in ivory, Mrs. Robin d'Erlanger a jade Buddha, Lady Ravensdale a Grecian priestess in stone, the Princess Imeritinsky a figure in Sèvres porcelain. Lady Masserene was a decorative doll dressed in pyjamas, and Rosita Forbes a telephone cover in the form of a doll with a crinoline.

In the Hyde Park Pageant two hundred people well-known in Society and the Arts impersonated celebrities of a bygone day in a series of familiar incidents at Wyndham's Theatre; and through this and many similar entertainments money poured in for the "Save the Children" Fund, the Winter Distress League, the Miners' Relief Fund, and other charities in need of assistance. The desire to help is certainly a promising sign of the times. Another hopeful sign is the desire of many Society people to work. It was first evident in the eighties and nineties in a vogue among Society women for running a hat or blouse shop. The artificial part of the enthusiasm died down after a time, but a number of serious workers were left. In King Edward's days Lady Constance Stewart Richardson caused an immense sensation by becoming a professional dancer;

to dance with bare feet and draped in tulle on a music-hall stage was then a thing unheard of.

One of the Setons of Abercorn has lately forsaken Society for the stage; she has been training for five years and is quite prepared to rough it, if necessary. Lady Ossulston runs a laundry and takes a pride in dispensing with the disfiguring laundry marks. Lady Doria Hope worked as a sales girl for £5 a week at a fashionable shop in Fifth Avenue, and hoped to become a mannequin, but too much publicity forced her to resign. Princess Mary learned typewriting and set the fashion for many Society girls. The late Lord Swaythling's only daughter, and Lord Ashfield's daughter, have both gone through a complete office training. Two or three years ago Lady Page Wood, realizing the growing vogue for artistic shop window dressing, undertook to do original window displays. She started with her brother in a small office, and in spite of an entire lack of business experience she has done extremely well. Her method is to make a window as pretty as possible, emphasizing at the same time the goods for sale. An Italian Marchesa, related to half the Roman aristocracy, recently started a sandwich and snack bar in Mayfair, to which her many friends here roll up in large numbers; one of her waitresses is the daughter of a well-known Colonel. These are a few instances of the way in which Society people have taken up serious work, and it is quite usual to see some such advertisement in a high-class newspaper as: "The Hon. Mrs. — will accept a few ladies for training as mannequins at her mannequin training saloons." Girls of good family are eagerly sought after for mannequins because of the number of wealthy and influential friends they attract.

Mannequin parades are one of the great features of

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the world of dress to-day, and are often extraordinarily sumptuous. Some dressmakers travel about with their mannequins and give parades in country houses. One parade formed part of the Christmas programme at a country club; it was given under the great crystal chandeliers in the ballroom of what had once been an historic mansion; two dining-rooms were also used, and great log fires, flickering on the old oak panelling, gave an additional touch to the beauty of the scene. Three hundred frocks were shown, and the place was crowded with people who had motored in for many miles. These shows have a regular place in the modern woman's calendar of amusements, second only to bridge or matinées. They are often exhibitions worthy of a revue producer. Admission is invariably by invitation, and there is generally a surprise in reserve to stimulate interest.

Jewellery worth a million pounds was worn by mannequins at a dress parade at the Mayfair Hotel. Paul Caret had created special evening and Court gowns to set off the costliest necklaces, ear-rings, bracelets, rings and brooches that the National Jewellers' Association could provide, and the display was one of the most dazzling ever seen in London. One necklace of three rows of pearls was valued at £100,000, and a single ring, a huge flawless diamond, represented £20,000. There were necklaces of emeralds cut like melons, and small felt hats were adorned with brooches worth thousands. Tea tables were set in the ballroom and down the centre golden ropes formed a promenade for the mannequins. Extraordinary precautions were taken to prevent the jewels from being stolen. Decoy bearers of the jewels arrived formally in the hotel, but the real stones were brought to the kitchen entrance. The jewellers' assistants who had the genuine stones in their

pockets carried dummy attaché cases which contained matches and candles in case the electric light failed. All entrances were guarded, extra police patrolled Berkeley Street, and there were eight detectives in the ballroom. An announcer in a crimson coat called out each number, and as each mannequin appeared told the value of the jewels she wore, while an orchestra played soft music and limelight effects were constantly changed, enhancing the beauty of the spectacle.

The simpler fashion parades are a most useful aid to the woman shopper, for not only are creations for the wealthy displayed, but the gowns and coats of everyday wear, the big drapery stores having realized the great advantage of the opportunity. Sometimes several kinds of shops combine and display frocks from one firm, hats from another, shoes, stockings, handbags, jewellery and even tennis rackets. One curious result of these mannequin parades is that women are sure to copy the walk of the mannequin; sometimes they slouch, at others walk erect, taking tiny steps. To add interest to the occasion it is quite usual for some well-known actress to conduct the parade, which is a great attraction. Not long ago, in their display Hall, Barker's gave an exhibition of British artificial silks so lovely that only an expert could have distinguished them from the Lyons silks of old days, and each dress displayed the price of the material and the amount used, to give people an idea of the cost of making up the frock at home.

Enterprising linen-drappers sometimes try further developments of the mannequin stunt; one took advantage of the modern craze for legs to exhibit in his window a girl changing her stockings. The spectacle caused such a furore that the crowds pressing close broke the great plate glass window, and the police had to be summoned. Equal interest was caused on another



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occasion by the exhibition of the legs of a girl, in the latest hose, dancing the Charleston. This too came to a premature end, as a child was injured in the crowd. Ankle competitions at bazaars have had considerable popularity, but there has been such a surfeit of this sort of thing that very soon people will be saying like the bus conductor in the days when skirts were still long: "Bless you, legs ain't no treat to me"; he got a free exhibition every time a lady mounted to the top of his bus.

This is a wonderful age for the provincial and suburbanite who come up to town in their tens of thousands. They need never feel out of things now; whatever the length of their purse there is always something going on in which they can join. If they cannot afford to lunch at the Ritz or the Carlton, they can sit for half an hour in the long lounge of the one, or the Palm Court of the other, merely by ordering a cocktail, a glass of sherry, or even a glass of orange juice, or they can have tea at a comparatively cheap rate. They can dance at tea-time at the Savoy for 5s. a head, or at the Café de Paris, the Piccadilly Hotel or the Empress Rooms for 4s.; and at the Regent Palace Hotel and the Astoria Dance Salon for 2s. and 2s. 6d. If they are comparatively affluent there are dinner dances at such hotels as the Ritz from 25s. to 30s. a head; at smart restaurants like the Kitcat there are cabaret shows and dancing from nine till two, and for the smaller fry there are supper dances at the Regent Palace Hotel from ten till twelve-thirty for 3s. 6d. Evening dress is not essential at the Café Anglais or the grill at the Piccadilly Restaurant, and both have cabarets. A girl alone can easily find a dance teacher who gives practice dances three evenings a week at 3s. 6d. each, or she can join a small dance club at an entrance fee and with a



subscription of a guinea and a half and dance all the evening on a cup of coffee. At the cinemas for prices ranging from a few pence people can spend a whole afternoon or evening in enjoyment, and then they can get a meal at almost any price, with music included, at the Lyons' palaces. How different from fifty years ago, when the only place at which a woman alone could have a light meal was the infrequent confectioner's. The present generation could hardly imagine life without a Lyons, but in those days there was not even an A B C, an Express Dairy or a Slater's, and on Sunday no meal was procurable for the single female.

The keynote of the recent motor show was luxury at low prices, and this may also be taken as the keynote of modern life. The hours of work have been reduced, and wages are three to four times as much as they were fifty years ago, and therefore although the price of living may be double, a fair margin is left for dress and personal enjoyment. The average person can have a good deal of pleasure nowadays, and is all the better for it morally, mentally and physically. People do not have to wait and save up for what they want as they used to do, the hire purchase system has been extended to all the necessities and a good many of the pleasures of life, and only exacts a comparatively small sum weekly or monthly. Among the working classes it is the custom to pay in to a shop or club for almost everything, beginning at houses and furniture and ending at Christmas dinners and holidays. This system was first tried in the United States of America, and is responsible for the enormous increase of trade in the States. But for the hire system we should not see such hundreds and thousands of cars on the roads, and the pleasure a cheap car introduces into the life of a family is amazing; it is often a means of keeping the members together; they

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get far more fresh air and their appreciation of the country is widened. Women do not now have to suffer the discomforts we endured in the early days of motoring, when no suitable headgear had been evolved and hats with brims and floating ribbons were pinned on to the hair, and unless a veil was tightly swathed round it the head that braved the elements in an open car was densely coated with dust. It might be a matter of pride to drive in a car in those days, but it was extremely uncomfortable. The tennis girl was not much better off; she had to wear a thick white piqué frock with a long skirt and long sleeves. It was a shapeless garment, pulled in at the waist by a belt that often came undone, and her shoes were soled with rubber as thick as the wooden frame of her racquet. In those days the sportswoman disdained feminine adornment.

The calendar of social events has not greatly changed during this century: the Derby, Ascot, Goodwood, Cowes, come each at its appointed time and have not declined in popularity; this is also true of the social exodus to the Riviera, Egypt, the Scotch moors. One difference is that "the little season" has greatly advanced in favour, and so have week-end parties. People are far more free, they enjoy themselves more, they dine a great deal at restaurants, and dances are given at the big hotels; this relieves hostesses of much social strain. The long dinner-parties that were often a weariness of the flesh no longer flourish. Lady Aberdeen was the first hostess to break up dinner-parties of fifty people into groups of ten or eight, among which conversation could be more intimate.

In the eighties it was not correct to dance more than once with the same partner. During and immediately after the War the bonds of etiquette were much

relaxed, chaperones vanished, and it was quite customary for a man to take a girl to a dance and be her sole partner. But after a time hostesses began to find that this sort of selfish behaviour did not add lustre to their entertainments, and the custom has to a large extent been dropped. It is now regarded as permissible only at a night club or subscription dance, not at a private house. But anyway it is not very popular; young people prefer to go about in a "bunch" or a "crowd."

Dinner usually begins at eight now instead of nine as in King Edward's reign. The modern hostess is not much concerned with precedence on ordinary occasions, and the men and women often leave the table together like they do on the Continent. Cocktails and cocktail parties are of course a feature of modern life, although the excessive emphasis laid on them in the modern novel will probably kill the vogue gradually. A connoisseur declared recently: "No epicure will drink too many. A cocktail is an exotic thing, and will never become an everyday affair with people of taste." At the moment many people make a habit of dropping in on their friends for half an hour or so before dinner for a cocktail and a gossip, or on Sunday morning. These casual calls are always short.

## IX

### HEALTH AND SPORT

ONE of our cleverest women doctors recently stated that it is a fallacy to suppose woman is physically unfitted for strenuous activity; if she has hitherto been frail and in need of care it has only been because of the artificial conditions of her life, and with the new understanding of hygiene and the healthy development of her body she will in time become as strong and fit as man, and able to undertake similar activities without hurt to her womanly functions.

It is an established fact that the health of the whole nation has improved. In August, 1928, Sir George Newman, Chief Medical Officer of the Ministry of Health, spoke optimistically. He declared that on the part of the population generally there is more willingness to live in the open air and to take recreative exercise; views are more sensible in the matters of food and clothing; sobriety is increasing; industry has far more safeguards, housing is improving, and the value of education is becoming more generally appreciated. He admitted that much disease and impairment still remain, but says we are on the high road to their amelioration.

In 1894 infant mortality was so high that in his report the Registrar-General said that if the mortality that ensued during the first three days or even the first entire week of an infant's life were maintained without diminution, every infant would die without completing

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## BRITISH WOMEN IN TWENTIETH CENTURY

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one year of its existence; but with every week there was a decline in the mortality, and the actual death-rate among infants was 149 per thousand; the town rate in the first month was twenty-seven per cent. above the rural rate, showing the evil effects of the mother having to work in factories or workshops. In those days employers in certain industries were still permitted to work women, and children from the age of thirteen, for fourteen hours a day exclusive of meals. At Salford, where there was a very large number of women working in factories, the doctor reported that the infant mortality was excessive.

A great change for the better began about 1895 and was to be seen in the decline of the general death-rate, although infant mortality was still 145 per thousand. By 1913 the general death-rate had fallen to 13.8 and the infant death-rate to 108. The War increased the rate of progress towards healthier conditions. The study of medicine advanced very rapidly from 1915 to 1918, and included the science of industrial medicine. The establishment of welfare centres where young mothers are instructed in the proper care of their children, the infants are examined and weighed every week, and where milk is given to those unable to afford it, has done much to improve the state of affairs. Gradually there have come about great improvements in housing and the food supply, and better sanitation. New standards of cleanliness and comfort have arisen, and demands for brighter and better homes, gardens and playing fields.

Fifty years of progress have almost halved the death-rate. In 1926 it was the lowest ever recorded: 11.6 per thousand as compared with 21.4 fifty years ago, and last year fewer deaths took place in England and Wales than in 1881, when the population was many millions





THE HON. MRS. VICTOR BRUCE



LADY HEATH



less. The health of the country was maintained at a very high level during 1927, and the infant death-rate was the lowest recorded since the introduction of civil registration: 69 per thousand births; in London it actually fell to 64. There is no more remarkable instance of progress in national hygiene than the halving of the infant death-rate within a period of a quarter of a century. It is indisputable that the infant death-rate is an index of the general standard of nourishment. The industrial troubles of 1926 did not exert an adverse influence on the infant death-rate; young children and their mothers were well cared for during the long stoppage in the coal industry. It is curious that the reduction in the infant death-rate has kept pace more or less with the fall in the birth-rate, which in 1927 was the lowest ever recorded, considerably less than in the years of war.

In one direction there has been little or no advance, viz., the prevention of maternal mortality; in the fifteen years between 1911 and 1926 the deaths from this cause totalled 50,763. All the work done for the last sixteen years has, it is said, failed to make any reduction in puerperal fever mortality. The matter was felt to be so urgent that a National Mother-saving Council has been formed, and a campaign launched to raise a fund of £250,000 to build a new wing to Queen Charlotte's Hospital, which is to be devoted not only to the treatment of patients but research into the causes, and the means to foresee and prevent puerperal fever and other diseases which cause maternal mortality, and also to train students, nurses, etc. The Council feel that the practice of midwifery is not entirely satisfactory; it is doubtful whether the training these nurses receive is always sufficient to equip them for the difficult work they are about to undertake; the standard of medical

training in midwifery is not yet sufficiently high, and a considerable number of doctors destined ultimately for general practice have received only the most elementary training in this branch of the science of medicine. Seven hundred and fifty thousand women give birth to a child each year, and Sir George Newman stated that out of this number 3,000 die in child-birth or soon afterwards. Dame Janet Campbell, Senior Medical Officer for Maternity and Child Welfare, said in her report on "The Protection of Motherhood": "The problem of preventing avoidable death and damage due to child-bearing can only be solved by simultaneous attack from various directions, administrative, educational, clinical, pathological and social." The question of the large number of infants who die under four weeks is also felt to be a matter intimately connected with that of maternal mortality. This is a matter in which the women's organizations can help by means of simply-worded propaganda and information as to the need of care during the early stages.

There is, moreover, an aspect of the age which cannot be viewed without some disquietude. A doctor lecturing some time ago at the Institute of Hygiene declared: "The whole of modern life cuts up rest and tends to increase emotion, and emotion increases intra-vascular strain. I cannot help thinking it is very largely due to all this that there is this tremendous increase of heart disease." He said that in 1925 there were 3,000 more deaths from diseases of the heart than in the previous year. "Look at the lives we lead," he added, "we are always on the rush; we can't even cross the road in peace." Certainly restlessness is a characteristic of the age, the result of the nervous tension of life nowadays. Still, the same tension was apparently equally evident in 1893, for Barnett Smith wrote: "The most

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distinguishing characteristic of the present age is its restless activity. It is seen in a thousand forms, and all our movements are as rapid as those of the giant steam. . . ." With some people this restlessness takes the form of constantly changing their place of abode, with others, their occupation, with others, a desire to be always going from one amusement to another, and with others of the *wanderlust*. A very typical example of the last is that of one of our authors, who returned not long ago from a 5,000 mile journey across Africa, involving, as she herself publicly confessed, not only "almost intolerable hardship, sickness and the lassitude of long-drawn-out defeat," but the loss of her two companions by dysentery and death. With a callousness that does little credit to her heart, she announced the net result was that she had returned "not broken but renovated." She went on to urge that "change of the kind is so necessary." If it is to result in the death of two men to every woman renovated, it seems as if the method were a dear one.

Statistics show that the total number of London lunatics has risen from 16,362 in 1890 to 24,863 in 1927; and recoveries have fallen from 19.79 to 17.99; and deaths from suicide were equal to a rate of 125 per million, which is the highest recorded from this cause.

The craze for a slim silhouette is not without its dangers; dieting to reduce their figures some women practise to an extent that is most deleterious both to their health and their nerves. Cocktails and cigarettes are also injurious, as Dr. Scharlieb has told us emphatically.

But these are side issues, due for the most part to individual folly. The outstanding fact remains that the general health and physique of women has marvellously improved. The games and physical exercises, fresh air, and light, suitable garments which



are insisted upon in practically all schools, have worked miracles. The Medical Officer of Health for Shropshire said a good word for the dress of the modern girl in his presidential address to the Society of Medical Officers of Health: "Loose dresses, short skirts, low necks and thin stockings have allowed stimulation of the skin by sun and air, have created a desire for exercise, and have allowed free play of the limbs and body. Dancing has provided a most valuable and almost universal exercise, and has taught the people how to walk with toes pointed straight forward." He took exception to the Girl Guides' uniform as unhygienic, and suggested it should be changed. A woman doctor supported the view that clothes should never be tight or heavy but should be loosely woven in order to admit air. She added: "It is a mistake to over-clothe."

A recent report on the "Physique of Women in Industry," published by the Industrial Fatigue Research Board, contains some interesting information as a result of measuring and testing 4,336 women, who were for the most part industrial workers but also included college girls. Forty of them were girls who do navy work in a chemical factory from six a.m. to six p.m., with two hours off for meals and who work bare-footed. One of them shovels between 20 and 25 tons of crude borite a day, lifting it to a height of about 2 feet 6 inches. Girls in a Midland brick works carry loads of bricks 5 lbs. short of a hundredweight for a distance of 70 to 80 yards. The carriage and physique of all these girls the report says are literally remarkable. The findings of the Board show that modern industry is inflicting no hardship in the shape of excessive physical exertion on the women taking part in it. No woman is compelled to suffer injury or even discomfort in her work. With regard to the remaining women: the

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college women were taller, heavier and stronger than the average women engaged in industry; this was partly due to the fact that fifty-five per cent. had been born and brought up in country districts, and all had two hours gymnastics a week besides games. Under such conditions as these a large number of splendid young Amazons have grown up, eager to seize on every activity that is a test of nerve and physical condition, even at the risk of their lives. Various exploits prove that in some directions they are already in a fair way to rival men.

A most remarkable feat was Miss Mercedes Gleitze's swim across the Channel; indeed the whole history of her attempt. She tried eight times before she succeeded. It was always a question of her power to endure and to resist the cold. Her trainer said he was strongly of opinion that women are able to stand cold in the water longer than men; and another expert declared that the reason is a woman's muscles are neither so rigid nor so thinly covered as a man's. Miss Gleitze, who is a small, slim, quiet girl of nineteen, saved every penny she could in order to make the attempt, and lived for nothing else. She began trying in August, 1922; in 1925 she made two more attempts; and again in August and September, 1926; her two final attempts were in September and October, 1927. On one occasion she was eleven hours in the water, and after a terrific struggle, refusing all entreaties to come out, and repeating: "I must succeed and I will succeed," she got within two miles of Dover, when she had to be forcibly taken out of the water. Her crowning attempt was on October 7th, 1927. She started from Griz Nez at two-fifty-five in the morning, her pilot rowing five yards ahead. For the greater part of the way there was fog, and it was often so dense that the fishing-boat

which accompanied her found it very difficult to keep her in sight. It was the first time an attempt had been made so late in the year, and the water was very cold; she afterwards confessed that during the last three hours she suffered terrible pain in her limbs. At six-ten she touched the rocks near the South Foreland, and with the words: "Thank God I am conscious," collapsed into unconsciousness, and knew no more till she came round in the cabin of the fishing-boat two hours later.

The public had hardly ceased to marvel when two other girls achieved the same triumph. One was a nursemaid, Miss Hilda Sharp, who was accompanied by thirty-eight witnesses in a tug. She had some very bad moments and a nasty landing, but two hours later she went back to Griz Nez declaring she would have another try, as she had failed to lower the record and had not won the prize of £1,000 which had been offered. The other was also a girl in her 'teens, Miss Ivy Hawke. A man who started seven minutes after her was obliged to give up his attempt after ten hours in the water, when he was five miles from the English coast. During the fourth hour she had cramp and felt rather despondent, but recovered and was quite fit when she reached St. Margaret's Bay, although it seemed to her a very long time before a suitable place was found for her to land. "At last I have achieved the ambition of my life," she said. It was her third attempt.

Our English girls can hold their own in the water. The youngest competitor at the Olympic games, a girl of twelve, was a member of the British swimming team; and the world's record was twice beaten by two girls in the women's 150 yards back stroke championship.

But woman's exploits in the water pale beside her achievements in the air. To our grandmothers, even if they had known of such a marvel as flying, feats on the

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part of a woman like those of Lady Heath and Lady Bailey would have seemed absolutely incredible, far exceeding the wildest flights of fancy in any fairy-tale.

The long lone African journey of Lady Bailey is one of the finest and most daring in the annals of light aeroplane flying. In ten months she travelled alone, and as her own pilot, at least 18,000 miles in the air. Her husband, Sir Abe Bailey, the South African millionaire, can hardly be said to have encouraged her. "Flying is a man's job," he had said. "I don't think women ought to tackle aviation." She left Croydon on March 9th, 1928, to fly to Cape Town, not for any particular reason except that her husband was at the Cape and she thought she would like to fly there. She meant to make it a pleasure trip, to fly about and visit friends and places of interest, and drew up no time-table. She went by herself in a light Moth aeroplane, equipped with a single Cirrus engine of only 30-80 h.p., finding her own way from landing place to landing place, and confident that in spite of all difficulties she would succeed in winning through. She flew via Paris, Marseilles, Malta to Cairo, and there the Anglo-Egyptian authorities refused to allow her to proceed across the dangerous area of the Southern Sudan without an escort. Luckily Flight-Lieutenant Bentley, who happened to be flying with his wife from Cape Town to England, agreed to accompany her from Khartoum to Nimule. When she left him she had to fly without a map from Kisumu to Tabora, and losing her way had to turn back to inquire the route. This caused her to reach Tabora at the hottest time of day, when the air was "bumpy"; the aerodrome at Tabora is 4,000 feet above sea-level. According to her own account she took insufficient notice of the conditions and struck an air pocket near the ground, with the



result that her machine made a heavy landing, and the under carriage collapsed; it overturned and came to rest upside down, with the fuselage and main wing spar broken. Undaunted she wired to the De Haviland Company for a new Moth, and one was supplied from Nairobi a few days later. She must have extraordinary courage to have been able to continue alone in a similar machine after a crash. It was not the last of her difficulties on the outward journey; she had an attack of influenza at Broken Hill. However, she reached Cape Town on April 30th. After a month or two she prepared to fly back, and when she took another route her difficulties began. The only map she had been able to procure included only a part of the journey, and before long she found herself up in the mountains lost in a mist. She had to turn round and start afresh, turning westward at Elizabethville, which is exactly in the centre of South Africa. Her route now lay through the Belgian Congo over a region of rivers, swamps and jungles which the Belgians have organized for air transport by a chain of aerodromes, but which is always flown—for purposes of safety in case of engine trouble—by Handley-Page machines with three engines, and for the same reason much of the rest of her route outside British territory is only flown by military aircraft carrying two pilots. From Boma on the coast she meant to fly across the interminable and lonely wastes of the Sahara, but the French persisted in refusing to allow her to proceed unescorted over the Sudanese danger zone, so she set out on what turned out to be the most interesting but the most hazardous section of the whole tour, and passed over Portuguese and Spanish colonies. After Dakar her engine was inclined to “splutter,” and at Casablanca she came down to have a look at it. The mechanic there did not quite under-





LADY BAILEY



MERCEDES GLEITZE SWIMMING THE CHANNEL : THE LAST LAP



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stand her engine but did his best, and she went on with it still inclined to "splutter"; she says she really prefers to see to things herself. At last she arrived at Paris with the sky full of snow clouds and a great bank of fog creeping up. All she said was that she was very dirty and it would take her hours to get clean, and she held out oily hands with a smile. She was not only the first woman but actually the first pilot who has flown from Rhodesia to Europe by way of the Belgian Congo, French Equatorial Africa and the West Coast, and no other airwoman has looked on the Sahara from its southern edge. She said the various nations whose territory she traversed in Africa are all going ahead with their air transport, and she believes it will be easy before very long for "any amateur like myself" to fly across West Central Africa. One difficulty she had was that she could only carry two suit-cases, and was obliged to obtain clothes where and how she could on the way; but wherever she went she found everyone kind and helpful. "I have enjoyed every minute of the flight," was her verdict. Her mother and three of her five children were there to greet her when she arrived back at Croydon. Lady Bailey is one of those enterprising women who are able to bring up quite a large family and yet perform exploits. She considers flying "wonderfully easy," and was one of the first women to own a Moth; her machine is capable of remaining ten hours in the air without coming down. This opening up of Africa by aviation will have an extraordinary effect; in some parts of the Congo they have had to wait a year for the goods they order by the ordinary route.

Mrs. Elliott Lynn, now Lady Heath, was, however, the first aviator to fly alone from Cape Town to London, covering 10,000 miles in a little over three months, in a 30 h.p. Avro Avian light aeroplane. The bush country

of Tanganyika and East Africa is an endless waste of desolate country mostly covered by scrub varied by oceans of grass well over a man's head. The chances of rescue in a forced landing are little less hopeless than a fall into the Atlantic. For a large part of her journey this was the kind of country over which Lady Heath was a pioneer. That she was not unaware of the dangers is evident from the fact that she carried a phial of morphine "in case . . ." From Northern Nyasaland to Khartoum she was escorted by Lieutenant Bentley. From Cairo she flew via Sollum and Benghazi to Tripoli. As the British authorities could not furnish her with an escort for the North African Mediterranean section of her flight she appealed to Mussolini, who sent her an Italian seaplane to escort her to Italy, and after a short visit to him she continued her way home. On her arrival a luncheon was given in her honour by the Overseas League, of which she is an old member. They expressed their pride in her exploit.

She has performed various other feats. She was twice victorious at the second international aviation meeting at Zurich in August, 1927, although the only woman pilot, and the only pilot owner to take part, her Avro Avian the only British machine competing. It was by her initiative that the international law was passed which permitted a woman to hold a commercial licence to fly, and she was the first woman to secure the B certificate which authorized her to carry passengers for money, utilizing it to become instructress at a flying school at Brooklands. She was the first woman pilot to fly from London to Glasgow.

On May 20th, 1927, with Lady Bailey as passenger she created a world's altitude record for light aeroplanes. They reached a height of 16,000 feet, 160 feet short of

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three miles. Later on she broke this record by climbing 23,000 feet, more than four miles. If it had not been for the intense cold she thinks she could have climbed even higher. The visibility at that height was wonderful; she could see right across Kent and the Channel to the French coast, eighty miles distant.

Women are becoming more and more keen about flying, and they are encouraged by Government. In 1928 the Air Ministry offered six £50 flying scholarships to women who cannot afford the instruction fees for the lessons given by thirteen Government subsidized private flying clubs, and 200 women are reported as learning to fly. Two film actresses, a fashionable West End dressmaker and a chauffeuse were among the 35 women who were being taught to fly at one aerodrome. The Hampshire Aeroplane Club has the record number of women members of any flying club in this country, 50 out of a membership of 380.

In April, 1928, Miss Spooner of the London Aeroplane Club, the only woman entrant in the Suffolk Handicap Air Race for light planes, beat all her male rivals in a two-seater Moth, accomplishing the 21 miles course at an average speed of 78 miles an hour. It was her first race.

Among Society women air enthusiasts are Lady Loughborough, the Hon. Mrs. Richard Norton, the Hon. Mrs. Victor Bruce, Mrs. Wills and Mrs. Mond, who are all members of the Mayfair Flying Club and its Women's Flying Reserve. The Duchess of Bedford recently flew to India. Lady Drummond Hay flew from Budapest to Constantinople—900 miles—in one day. She was the one Englishwoman on the Zeppelin that Dr. Eckener took over to America from Friedrichshaven.

Peggy O'Neill, the well-known actress, who holds British and U.S.A. air-pilot's certificates, says that as a



rule there is far less strain involved in flying than in motoring. An aviator does not have to keep a sharp eye for hidden turnings, careless pedestrians, etc. Exceptional bodily strength is not required, but patience, keenness of perception and the ability to act quickly. She said she had engaged in most of the games that attract women to-day, and found none that yielded the pleasures and thrills enjoyed by the aviator. She believes that when aircraft undertake the delivery of mails, and are used as taxis, etc., the majority of the pilots will be women.

Tragedies have occurred among airwomen. The saddest was that of young Lady Carbery, who had been so very happy in the possession of her Moth. Her husband was running a big coffee plantation in Kenya, and she was delighted because they could reach Nairobi in forty minutes by air; by train it takes nine hours. She meant to use her little air car for shopping trips into Nairobi in the mornings, and to attend the races and local amusements. She thought, too, it would be a great comfort in case of illness, as it provided a means of summoning a doctor without delay. She had scarcely got used to her new possession when she crashed while instructing a pupil. Another victim was Miss Honor Wellby, who crashed at Brooklands. She had had ten hours in a series of lessons with an instructor, and one thirty-five minutes by herself, and was practising to qualify for her certificate.

The first woman in the world to go up in an aeroplane was Miss Bacon, but she said flying had no nerve-trying thrill like that she experienced when she was lowered in a "bosun's chair" at the end of a rope little thicker than a lead pencil, 350 feet down the Gaping Ghyll, one of the most romantic and deepest chasms in Europe.

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Englishwomen have performed some mountaineering feats. A London girl of twenty-two was the first woman to climb Kilimanjaro, 19,321 feet, the highest mountain in Africa, the summit of which has only been reached four times before. It is a particularly tremendous test of endurance, because a strenuous journey through wild and unopened country has first to be faced. Miss Macdonald's father is a well-known member of the Alpine Club, and she has done mountaineering with him since she was twelve. She is a tall, well-built girl, keen on riding, dancing and outdoor games. Dr. Dorothy Lloyd, director of the British Leather Manufacturers' Research Association, created a record by ascending and descending the Eiger in one day; it is over 13,000 feet, one of the highest peaks in the Jungfrau Alps. Miss Shepherd was the first Englishwoman to climb the Eiger by the difficult north-east crest. Four Englishwomen, one of them Dr. Corbett, and all members of the Pinnacle Club, ascended several snow peaks, over 12,000 feet high, in the Italian Alps, without guides.

But these feats are nothing as tests of endurance compared with the 15,000 mile drive which the Hon. Mrs. Victor Bruce and her husband accomplished in their car on the Monthlèry track in 220 hours 32 minutes 54 seconds. They drove in turn day and night at an average speed of 68 miles an hour, breaking all previous records by 48 hours, in spite of the fact that once the car skidded and overturned, and the consequent damage caused a loss of nineteen hours. During the last three days the cold was intense. Hurtling round the Monthlèry track in the middle of the night at 85 miles per hour with the temperature 12 degrees below zero was a feat to tax the courage of the strongest man. Mrs. Bruce confessed that when she finished her spell at the wheel

on the last afternoon she thought it was the end; she was crying with pain. But her most terrible moment was one night when she skidded. She hung on to the wheel like grim death, missing some private cars by less than half a yard. The only illumination round the track was the red lights, and it was most misleading to look at them. She had a hard struggle sometimes to keep awake. The car passed 10,000 times before the cabin where the officials were timing the test. Mrs. Bruce has seventeen records to her credit.

Miss Maconochie, a girl of twenty, who had not been in a motoring event before, did the 120 miles course at Brooklands in 30 minutes under the time necessary to secure a gold medal in the Junior Car Club's high speed reliability trial. Two other girls were awarded silver medals. She also won the Brooklands Automobile Racing Club's first race for women at 82 miles an hour. There were seven entries for this race. One girl was practising before the race and crashed at 95 miles an hour, luckily escaping without a scratch, but she sorrowed that she was unable to enter. In another race organized by the Southport Motor Club, the only lady competitor crashed and had the terrible misfortune to kill her father, who accompanied her. The tragedy occurred a week after her engagement to another keen motorist.

In August, 1927, a team of three English women motor-cyclists won the International Silver Vase, with a loss of five marks out of a total of 900. In this contest for national teams, riding machines of any origin and entailing a week's strenuous riding over mountain tracks in the Lake District, they beat trios of men from five countries. The Englishmen's team was third with a loss of 79 marks.

At the international meeting for women athletes at

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Stamford Bridge, Miss Ridgley won the 100 yards scratch race against French and German rivals; she also won the 200 metres match race in only a fifth of a second more than the world record. Miss Clark of South Africa beat the world's record in the 100 yards hurdles by one second. All the girls ran easily enough, but found walking a much more severe test. The girl who won the long jump was married next day.

In the roller-skate race organized by the All Blacks Club, Brixton, two of the five girls who started covered the 52 miles from Big Ben to Brighton. The first of them, a girl of nineteen, arrived exhausted with bowed head, but managed to smile at the crowd which had gathered; the other had cut her knees in a fall and wore bandages, but she had done it in 8 hours 10 minutes.

Miss Enid Wilson, aged eighteen, won the English-woman's golf championship on October 5th, 1928; since Miss Joyce Wethered made her astounding debut, and won the title in 1920, this is the first time it has gone to so young a girl. Men and women seem to be more evenly matched in golf than in any other game. In a recent big event at Stoke Poges between teams of women and men, although three of the men had represented Great Britain against America in the "Walker" Cup match, and five of the others were international players, the women won seven of the ten singles.

A Women's Cricket Association was formed in 1927, which arranges tours to all parts of the country for the season. Cricket was one of the earliest games played by women. As far back as 1743 an important match was played at Finsbury between the Maids of Westdean and Chilgrove and the Maids of Singleton and Charlton; and it is a curious and astonishing fact



that over-arm bowling was invented by a woman, daughter of the famous Kent player John Willes, who died in 1852, and who used to practise cricket with his daughters and sister, kindred spirits. More recently two women's teams gave exhibition matches in various parts of the country, rather to the disgust of Dr. W. G. Grace, who thought they did not do justice to the game. During the 1922 season one girl captured no less than 120 wickets for the average toll of two runs a wicket; and another scored 217 runs in one match.

Women are taking seriously to sailing, and for some years the number of Solent Sunbeams and Seaview Mermaids sailed by women owners has been increasing. Ten women steered in the Royal Yacht Squadron Regatta in 1928; Miss C. Methuen won a first prize in the Seaview Mermaids' class. Miss Carstairs, granddaughter of one of the original founders of the Standard Oil Company, is very keen on motor-boats, and has had three special ones built to attain a speed of 100 miles an hour; she hopes to challenge for the British International Trophy for motor-boats. She was one of the women pioneers of Empire at a gathering organized by the National League at the Mayfair Hotel in July, 1928; Lady Warrender was another, for enterprise on the polo ground, and Mrs. Court Treatt for exploration in the Sudan.

Women secured the first two places in the race for the Newmarket Plate last year. Miss Iris Rickaby, daughter of the jockey Fred Rickaby, raced neck and neck for the winning-post with Mrs. A. Heald, flashing past a length and a quarter ahead. A veteran who had won the race on thirteen previous occasions came in a very bad third. This is the second time Miss Rickaby has won. In 1925 the Plate was won for the first time by a woman, Miss Joel, daughter of the millionaire.





THE BATSWOMAN OF TO-DAY HITS OUT WELL



WOMEN IN A POINT TO POINT RACE AT WARMINSTER



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## HEALTH AND SPORT

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Mrs. Carthew, who died last year, was a very well-known woman race-horse owner, a gay and cheerful person always surrounded by friends, and a very good loser. Her most notable success was when her horse Medal dead-heated with Niantic in the 1927 Cambridgeshire.

In tennis English girls have distinguished themselves. Perhaps the chief favourite with the public is Betty Nuttall, partly on account of her extreme youth. Her popularity may be gauged from the fact that by a few minutes' talk on the wireless she raised £850 for the Waifs and Strays. Mrs. L. A. Godfree won the doubles championship in 1921 and 1924 with her sister, Mrs. Stocks. But the list of successes in tennis is too long to enumerate here. This book is not a treatise on sport, it merely intends to give a very general indication of the fields of sport in which women now take their part.

Our hockey women had a wonderful tour in America in 1927, winning every one of the fifteen games arranged, often by double figures; their score was 231 goals to 3.

Margaret Rivers Larminie, the well-known novelist, won the Women's Badminton Singles Championship in 1928 for the second time in sixteen years.

Fencing has its devotees particularly among women civil servants. Miss Ena Strong, who instructs them, with Miss Olyve Bidwell, is typical of the present generation of all-round women athletes; she plays pretty well everything, but finds fencing the most strenuous.

When women first appeared on the river as a rowing four in the nineties, they were all from the London School of Medicine; and the winning crew were all from the same institution in a thrilling race recently between Reading and London University. Oxford authorities are still rather coy about undergraduettes' rowing races.

On a recent occasion the two boats entering were not permitted to race against each other, but only to be timed over the same course, and the ordeal had to take place before breakfast as it was thought this would avoid spectators. As a matter of fact the course was thronged by cheering crowds in which undergraduates were prominent, evincing as much enthusiasm as they do for their own Eights.

A woman recently scored 102 points out of a possible 105 with rifle shooting at Bisley. She totalled 18 bull's eyes and three inners with her 21 shots.

## X

### WOMAN AND THE ARTS

BARNETT SMITH in 1893 declared: "I do not think it probable we shall ever see developed in woman the expansive imagination of a Shakespeare or the kingly intellect of a Bacon, but we have ample evidence that she is capable of attaining any but those great creative heights . . . while during the last twenty years it is only in fiction that the greatest of English writers was a woman, the progress made in other directions has been so rapid that the philosophic and scientific talent of women during the next generation may be fully abreast that of men. Let us gladly hail this sign of the times and have no fear that it will strike at the root of masculine ascendancy, but even if it should have that terrible result let us capitulate with composure and dignity. . . . George Eliot and other female writers have given us some of the best and noblest books of our time. . . ."

To return for a moment to the beginning of that century: Jane Austen's novels were the first by a woman to present—with delightful humour—characters and conversations that are true to life. They were published between 1811 and 1817, and thirty years elapsed before the Brontë sisters flashed into prominence. Charlotte's "Jane Eyre" (1847) was followed in 1848 by Emily's "Wuthering Heights" and Anne's "Tenant of Wildfell Hall"; "Shirley" was issued in 1849. The mingling in these books of human document with



romanticism made a strong appeal to the public, but the gifted trio had little time for the enjoyment of their triumph : Emily died in 1848 and Anne in the following year, Charlotte survived until 1855. Their novels have had a widespread and lasting influence. In 1859 and 1860 George Eliot's "Adam Bede" and "Mill on the Floss" appeared, and had an immediate and enduring success. These were the giants, and with their passing the writing of fiction by women declined upon a lower but well-maintained level.

Mrs. Henry Wood created a sensation and began her long reign in the affections of the public in 1861 with "East Lynne," and in the same year Miss Braddon published her best-known novel, "Lady Audley's Secret"; both these writers maintained their ascendancy for a great many years. Ouida published "Under Two Flags" in 1867, and her novels soon came to be regarded as the last word in daring impropriety. This was unfortunate, because her literary qualities suffered eclipse—her books would be considered as mild as milk in the present day. In her "Ariadne" and "In Maremma" the charm of Italy is most subtly conveyed. "Two Little Wooden Shoes" has charm and pathos, and some of her essays are delightful. She had an intense love of animals. Her culminating novel "Moths" depicted Corrèze, the marvellous tenor, singing half a note flat because of his tragic love for Vera, the tall pale child whom her mother had forced into marriage with a former lover of her own, an evil, exquisitely-mannered Russian prince. Ouida may have "piled on the agony," but she had a true instinct for romance, and the girls of those days, reading her novels in secret—they were under the ban of every Victorian mother—gloried in her wonderful guardsman heroes, Admirable Crichtons, usually verging on forty. These

heroes were far more wholesome than some of the immoral flabby heroes of to-day; they had "vim" and they treated women like the chivalrous knights they were. The publication of "Moths" in 1880 put the final touch to Ouida's undesirable reputation. In those days if a book were considered improper it was practically boycotted; publishers were afraid of prosecution, a very wholesome fear which received justification from the imprisonment of Ernest Vizetelly for his issue of a Zola novel. A touch of the same fear might not be amiss now.

Rhoda Broughton was another popular novelist of the eighties and nineties, and survived into this century. "Cometh up as a Flower," "Red as a Rose is She," and "Nancy" were her best novels. She introduced the large, well-born but rather penniless family into fiction; her boys and girls in their shabby school-room making toffee and composing epitaphs, the heroine adorable in a boiled blue rag of a frock, captivated her readers. Like Miss Braddon, Rhoda Broughton continued to write up to old age, and with a good measure of success; they had stamina, the Victorian women novelists. I do not fancy many of our clever young women of to-day will reach their hundredth novel and still be "going strong" as Miss Braddon did, and Rita is doing.

Mrs. Humphry Ward must not be forgotten; in her time she was the most powerful of our women novelists; the success of her religious novel "Robert Elsmere" was made by Gladstone's outspoken admiration, and her political novels won considerable fame; her worth, strangely enough, was first discovered in America, where she had a great following.

In 1886 Marie Corelli's star rose with the publication of her "Romance of Two Worlds," and she soon

became a best seller—almost the best seller. She wrote with fluent pen, highly charged with colour. In one novel she depicted Satan, the fallen angel, in fascinating guise, and in another told the story of "Barabbas"; the first time, I believe, that a Bible story was transformed into a novel. In her later years she was bitterly hostile to newspaper critics, and absolutely refused to send out copies of her books for review. Lucas Malet, Charles Kingsley's daughter, was another popular novelist.

All these writers were romantics, sentimentalists and emotionalists; it can scarcely be wondered at, therefore, that publishers should not recognize the potentialities of "The Heavenly Twins" when Madame Sarah Grand offered it to them. She had been writing for years without any particular recognition. It is said that seventeen firms refused the manuscript before the author encountered the far-sighted individual who made a fortune out of it.

The fact was the revolt of women had begun in fiction; it had been presaged by more than one writer, but Ibsen was its first definite exponent. In the "Doll's House" and "Hedda Gabler," first performed in London in 1889 and 1892, he gave form and shape to the pale introspective woman with a grievance against man; and encouraged by his sympathy women began to resent the lack of appreciation of their male belongings and to yearn to lead their own lives and develop their own personalities. In the world of labour outside the home they were beginning to feel their feet, and they demanded freedom from the burden of excessive child-bearing. These feelings, seething beneath the surface, were voiced by Sarah Grand in "The Heavenly Twins," and made the book an enormous and immediate success. Other authors started up with the "Yellow

Aster " and "The Superfluous Woman," and George Egerton launched her venomous "Keynotes." Olive Schreiner's "Story of an African Farm," published in 1893, firmly established the reign of the discontented, introspective woman who resented the importunate demands of the brutal male, and novels emphasizing the wrongs of women became the vogue until John Oliver Hobbes and Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler created a diversion with their epigrams. Ethel M. Dell next appeared upon the scene with her strong silent heroes, who think nothing of carrying a presumably fairly heavy heroine over the mountains for hours at a stretch. They in their turn had to give way to the Sheik, who has had a very long run in fiction. It is strange that in these days when women have won equality with their own menfolk they should appreciate so heartily in fiction the brutal dominance of the alien male. I cannot help the lurking suspicion that women miss that domination by physical force which they enjoyed in the time of the cave man.

Of our modern women novelists May Sinclair is perhaps the cleverest; every book she writes is a genuine contribution to the sum of our knowledge of human nature. "Three Sisters" is a clever study of hysteric repression, "Harriet Freaan" of the futility of some women's lives; the "Cure of Souls" is informed with genial irony. Another student of the feminine temperament, of which she gave us a very interesting example in her "Regiment of Women," is Clemence Dane. The author of "Elizabeth and her German Garden" has a strong hold on the affections of the public; nearly all her books are delightful; full of charming description, humour and character. Equally delightful is Rose Macaulay; her books teem with witty and entertaining observation of the vagaries



of modern life. Virginia Woolf's method is interesting. She seeks to convey to her readers the impressions and reflections that flit through the minds of human beings while engaged in the commonplace actions of everyday life. Her style is fluent and rambling, suited to inconsequent thoughts, and a relief from the brief, staccato sentences affected by many modern writers. Her weakness is that she does not create memorable characters, and her method has traps for over-eager imitators. Stella Benson is clever and enterprising; she has shot tigers in India and was the first Englishwoman to penetrate to Laon in Indo-China. Her book "Good-bye Stranger," Storm Jameson's "Lovely Ship" and Virginia Woolf's "To the Lighthouse" were the three chosen one year by the Femina Vie Heureuse British Prize Committee. A novelist who has not received the recognition her work deserves is Mary Gaunt; although some people, men especially, are enthusiastic about her. Her travel books are faithful, true and entertaining records, and her novels can scarcely be beaten for graphic local colour. The best is "Every Man's Desire," the scene of which is set on the coast of West Africa, in one of the old Portuguese castles that was once a stronghold of the slave trade. Eleanor Scott's "War Among Ladies" is a most poignant tale, a human document. Space forbids my mentioning many other excellent novelists; I have merely selected a few significant types.

An interesting development in fiction writing of late years is the large influx of young women, many fresh from college. These young women are extremely clever, and their particular *forte* is modern conversation. Sometimes there is a hard, metallic brightness about them, and occasionally an unkind skit on their elders, whose point of view they fail to understand. They are





MISS CLEMENCE DANE



MRS. PATRICK CAMPBELL



apt to discuss phases of sexual life, and some do not even hesitate to introduce a slight flavour of Lesbianism, but the reader feels there is more audacity than experience in their allusions. Clever as these girls are, as yet they have only produced ephemeral work, and in their highest flights are earthbound; the world seems a small place to them. Whether after the modern restless fashion they lose interest or their ideas are limited it is difficult to say, but after their first brilliant book they seldom pursue an upward career. However, there is still plenty of time for them to do big things. One of the earliest was Rosamund Langbridge; years ago, a charming girl of nineteen, she wrote an extraordinarily brilliant first novel.

E. M. Delafield appeared soon after the War with her very clever, rather unkind "War Worker"; she is an exception to the general rule, and turns out clever novels at regular intervals. Sylvia Thompson based her "Rough Crossing"—also rather cruel—on her experiences at two well-known schools. This young author was stated by a daily paper to have said that she found her three-months-old baby lethargic, but her pug Augustus was an angel. Margaret Kennedy has been the most successful of them all with her "Constant Nymph." Mollie Panter-Downes, an exceptionally youthful novelist, has a wonderful knack of reproducing the most attractive features of best sellers. Helen Simpson's "Cups, Wands and Swords" has some smart conversation, and her hero, Tony, is well-drawn; her description of a Chelsea party—beloved of the modern novelist—is true to life, but her heroine is wooden and the book has little of the vivid enjoyment which is inseparable from youth. Life appears to be a drab thing to this young author. Her book is rather like champagne without the sparkle.

Rosamond Lehmann's "Dusty Answer" has more fascination; she introduces charming glimpses of scenery, and her heroine is true to life; a group of slim young people who live next door pervade the tale, and against their impassivity the passionate heart of the heroine surges. At Oxford she encounters the same impassivity, and after a long and futile wait in a tea-shop for a much-loved friend, is left to contemplate the "Dusty Answer," which is all her clamorous spirit has received from life.

Of higher calibre, though more crude, are the novels of Mary Webb; they contain the germ of something greater; in her "Golden Arrow" she rises to a high conception of love, and her descriptions have vitality and charm. If she had lived she might have done great things. Greater still was Katherine Mansfield; although her talent was still in the shaping when she died she had grasped the "real thing." Her literary gift was limpid, crystalline, genuine; her pictures small but vivid; she had vision and an infinite capacity for taking pains. Her work, slight as it is, is more likely to defy time than that of any of the younger novelists. For work to live it must be worth while; most novels are only for the entertainment of the hour and have no height nor depth.

One distressing, but I hope ephemeral, feature of a number of novels to-day is the result of the authors' belief that for a book to create a sensation the characters must wallow in depravity, and to obtain the success for which they crave they will go to any disgusting lengths. It is a poor way to make a name, and I am very glad the Home Secretary has put down his foot and stopped the publication of two glaring examples. One might quote Browning's "Lost Leader" to them.

"Just for a handful of silver he left us,  
Just for a riband to stick in his coat."

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## WOMAN AND THE ARTS

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Why do they not realize that it is not filth but a real human interest that makes a book a best seller. Frequently their most attractive characters have a sex obsession such as, in real life, is only possessed by the abnormal or diseased. The instinct of sex naturally obtrudes into every life and cannot be disregarded, but it is absolutely false to make it the sole preoccupation of the average person; food, drink, sports, clothes, shopping, work, etc., occupy more time and thought in ordinary lives than the sex urge. This lack of proportion makes such novels both false and dangerous. The Home Secretary declared that the freedom of what a man may write or speak must be determined by the question as to whether what is written or spoken makes "one of the least of these little ones to offend"; "that," he said, "is the criterion"; it is a just and honest criterion, and one which our women novelists would do well to take to heart. Both the recent offenders were women; it is regrettable. They should remember that the average young person in the years before experience has revealed the mysteries of life is exceedingly apt, indeed accustomed to imagine him or herself in the position of the hero or heroine; it is inevitable that the young should expect to be the centre of a romance, and because they do the standard of life in novels should be decent; no matter how sordid the circumstances which the exigencies of her tale cause the author to depict, she should always be on the side of the angels. We want progress, to feel that with every decade we move forward. We have speeded up, we have cut off the frills and furbelows of sentimentality that used to impede us in Victorian days, and it seems a poor use of our new freedom to fall back into obscenity.

It is a significant fact that in a recent anthology of



modern poets there are thirty-nine men and only six women, i.e., only six women whose work is worthy to take a place among the poets of the day. This seems curious when we remember women's quick, receptive minds, their flashes of intuition, their ability to express their feelings—few women are inarticulate—their delight in lovely things, their output in novels. It is true we have a number who write charming verse, but they can scarcely be called poets. In the "Pageant of English Verse" which includes the English poets up to 1905, out of the 300 represented only 18 are women, and some of these have been included more by courtesy than by merit. It is of course quite understandable that in the days of grave hindrances when only the exceptional cultivated their minds and fancy, there should have been little poetic output, but in the present day, when women have every opportunity and encouragement, why are they mute? I think the reason is to be found with the poets of the Victorian era, or rather in the attitude towards them of the young women of to-day. With few exceptions youth is the time for the outpouring of the poetic spirit, and our young women have been shocked into repulsion by Victorian gush. They are afraid if they let themselves go their outpourings may have a hint of "sloppiness" as they call it. "The boy stood on the burning deck" has probably more to do with to-day's lack of feminine poetry than is usually realized; and can anyone imagine the average undergradette appreciating:

"I hear thee speak of the better land,  
Thou callest its children a happy band.  
Mother, oh where is that radiant shore,  
Shall we not seek it and weep no more."

The Victorians were certainly freer than we are in

regard to their feelings; they had no thought of shame in revealing all and more than they felt; they wallowed most happily in sentimentality and believed the more they displayed the more they were to be admired. It must also be remembered that the two chief poets of the Victorian age, Mrs. Browning and Christina Rossetti, both wrote for the most part from an invalid chamber, with more than a hint of headaches and eau-de-Cologne. Unmarried women, shut away from the world as Christina was for fifteen years, and Mrs. Browning was until her romance with Browning, it is only natural they should be slightly over-emphatic in some narrow directions. Mrs. Browning's art became a much stronger and better thing after she had met Browning. But of whatever we accuse Mrs. Browning it cannot be lack of ideas; she simply bubbles over with them, and out they tumble helter-skelter, tripping themselves up every now and then with the inability of her words to keep pace with them. She has no reticences, no discipline; she feels a thing acutely and out it comes. She is aware of her defects; but as she says in the preface to a volume of her poems: "While my poems are full of faults . . . they have my heart and life in them, they are not empty shells. If it must be said of me that I have contributed immemorable verses to the many rejected by the age, it cannot at least be said that I have done so in a light and irresponsible spirit. Poetry has been as serious a thing to me as life itself, and life has been a very serious thing; there has been no playing at skittles for me in either. I never mistook pleasure for the final cause of poetry; nor leisure for the hour of the poet. I have done my work so far . . . as the completest expression of that being to which I could attain, . . . feeling its shortcomings more deeply than any of my readers because

measured from the height of my aspiration." And in one of her sonnets she says :

" With stammering lips and insufficient sound  
I strive and struggle to deliver right  
That music of my nature, day and night,  
With dream and thought and feeling interwound."

But I am afraid the girls of to-day, overlooking her earnest striving, are more likely to think the following characteristic :

" Bertram finished the last pages, while along the silence ever  
Still in hot and heavy splashes fell his tears on every leaf.  
Having ended he leans backward in his chair with lips that  
quiver,  
From the deep unspoken ay and deep unwritten thoughts  
of grief."

Bertram was a lowly born painter who loved the lady Geraldine. It ends :

" Softened, quickened to adore her, on his knee he fell before  
her,  
And she whispered low in triumph : ' It shall be as I have  
sworn.  
Very rich he is in virtues—very noble—noble certes,  
And I shall not blush in knowing that men call him lowly  
born.' "

We cannot imagine this kind of thing appealing to the young people of the present day, and their scorn obscures their view of the qualities that might inspire them.

They tolerate Christina Rossetti although they are impatient with her :

" Oh, roses for the flush of youth  
And laurel for the perfect prime,  
But pluck an ivy branch for me  
Grown old before my time.  
Oh, violets for the grave of youth  
And bay for those dead in their prime,  
Give me the withered leaves I chose  
Before in the old time."



MISS EDITH SITWELL

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Morbid sentiments like these were appreciated in the nineties. Emily Brontë is far more akin to the present day :

“ No coward soul is mine,  
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere.”

And George Eliot's :

“ Oh, may I join the choir invisible,  
Of those immortal dead who live again  
In minds made better for their presence,”

has not been forgotten, but the Victorian age is judged rather by its sentimentality than by its sound qualities ; and this reputation, I am sure, is largely responsible for the paucity of poetic output among women to-day. Girls who have not plumbed the depths of their own emotions fear to attempt any expression of them lest they should endanger the poise on which they pride themselves. That they do not lack talent is obvious from the fact that in recent years two of them have won the Newdigate Prize at Oxford ; Miss Trevelyan in 1927, and Miss Cave in 1928.

I suppose our chief woman poet at the moment is Edith Sitwell. She has a genuine poetic gift and insight, and her technique is interesting. She maintains that the actual sound of the words in a poem should convey the theme to the reader, and she has achieved this with considerable success in her “ Spinning Song.” She has passed with éclat the severe test of the critical Oxford audience ; but she has the modern fear of losing her poise and entrenches herself behind a barrier of bizarre exoticism. She clothes herself in mediaeval brocade, wears antique rings, and sits—symbolically—upon a stage severely set beside her two clever brothers. The trio certainly enhance each other's personality, and they love to introduce an odd incon-

gruous note with the intent to startle. Possibly in days to come she will throw off her trappings and depend upon her poetic gift alone. Some would-be poets avoid gush by the use of stark simplicity; they are merely arid. Alice Meynell had the true poetic soul but it found expression rather in exquisite prose than in verse. Margaret L. Woods wrote some charming verses, and so have Lady Margaret Sackville, Violet Sackville West, Sylvia Lind and some others. Mary Webb's poems show the same feeling for Nature as her novels; they are simple and often instinct with beauty; and the same might be said of some other women poets; but few have expressed memorable thoughts in memorable phrases.

Nor have we many notable playwrights, although some women have an intense appreciation of the drama and have done a great deal to uplift it. Chief among these are Miss Lilian Baylis, whose splendid work at the Old Vic has been recognized in this year's Honours List, and Miss Horniman, to whose initiative the triumphs of the Repertory Theatre, Birmingham, are due. In every branch of the acting profession, too, there have been women who have risen to the highest rank: Mrs. Bancroft, Dame Madge Kendall, Mrs. Patrick Campbell, Miss Sybil Thorndike, Mrs. John Wood, Nellie Farren, Marie Lloyd, Lottie Venne, Marie Tempest, Fay Compton, Edith Evans: their names are many, but of successful plays by women there have been few. Clemence Dane's "Bill of Divorcement" is perhaps the cleverest and most significant play by a woman in recent years, and her "Will Shakespeare" was ambitious but not widely appreciated. May Edginton made a great success with "Secrets" because it touched a human chord in the heart of her audiences, and Gertrude Jennings has afforded much amusement

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with her bright comedies, notably "The Young Person in Pink" and her curtain raisers "Between the Soup and the Savoury," etc. Cicely Hamilton is also good enough to have been credited in the days before its origin was known, with "Fanny's First Play," and there are others who have written quite good plays but none have risen to great heights. Yet women try; Mrs. Shute managed to get her first play performed when she was seventy-three. It may not be entirely lack of talent which prevents women making a mark as playwrights. Some managers seem to think that unless a play has an undressing scene it is not likely to be a success. At one time there were five such plays on in London. It seems a poor compliment to a clever young actress that without an undressing scene no play featuring her is complete, as a dramatic critic recently stated in his mention of a popular favourite. Matters have come to such a pass that a new Purity League has been formed which is starting a campaign against bare legs and undress on the stage. Whenever the members consider too little is being worn in any play they attend they get up in the course of the performance and say: "I protest; this exhibition of bare legs is barbarous and disgraceful. She ought to wear more clothes." It is a distinct sign of decadence that there should be any need for such a society.

The election of Mrs. Laura Knight as an Associate of the Royal Academy in 1927 raised a discussion on the dearth of women painters. Women, it was said, have courage, tenderness, quick judgment, intuition and amazing capacities for endurance and hard work, but very few of them have vision, and geniuses are few and far between. A great many years certainly elapsed between the election of the first woman A.R.A., Angelica Kauffmann—and she was a Swiss—in 1769, and the

second, Mrs. Swynnerton—and she was not to be an active Associate, having passed the age limit, seventy-five, by two years, in 1922. It seems exceedingly strange that her undoubted talent should not have been recognized before except by such judges of artistic worth as Sargent, and yet her pictures are to be found in the Liverpool Art Gallery, the Luxembourg, in New York, Melbourne and Ottawa, and we have two in the Tate Gallery, “The Oreads” and “New Risen Hope.”

During this long period there was, however, at least one other notable woman painter: Lady Butler, whose pictures caused a furore in the latter half of the nineteenth century; they depicted with extraordinary dramatic force moving incidents of the battlefield. “Quatre-Bras,” “The Roll Call,” “Floreat Etona,” “The Dawn of Waterloo,” etc., were all immensely popular, and reproductions of them everywhere to be seen. Lady Butler was the wife of Sir William Butler, a distinguished soldier who served in Ashanti, Zululand, Egypt and the Sudan, and was “Commander-in-Chief” in South Africa. His experiences inspired his wife in the choice of her subjects. She first exhibited in the Academy in 1873, and in 1879 the number of votes she obtained for election were only two below Herkomer, who won the coveted place.

Miss Lucy Kemp Welch has also made a name; her animal pictures, particularly of horses, are exceedingly clever and full of movement. Her “Ponies in the New Forest” attracted a great deal of favourable attention at an Academy exhibition years ago, and has been acquired by the Tate Gallery; her pictures since have maintained her reputation. In 1914 she was elected the first President of the Society of Animal Painters, and after the War was commissioned to execute a large wall



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panel in the Royal Exchange representing women's work during the War.

We have three fine contemporary women artists; the veteran Mrs. Swynnerton, Mrs. Laura Knight and Mrs. Dod Proctor. Mrs. Laura Knight first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1903, and recently she obtained the second prize for painting at the Olympic Art Exhibition. Her name, in recognition of her work, is in this year's Honours List. Her husband, Mr. Harold Knight, was elected an A.R.A. a year after his wife; theirs is the first case of husband and wife holding this honour. At a recent exhibition of the work of the Royal Society of Painter Etchers the most arresting and outstanding of all the exhibits, according to Frank Rutter, was Mrs. Laura Knight's drypoint "A Young Girl." "This magnificent head, superb alike in modelling and expression," he said, "is equally interesting from the point of view of composition and the way in which the head has been used to fill the space of the square." His comment on another etching of hers, "Putting on Tights," was that it contained some admirable figure drawing.

Mrs. Dod Proctor's work has aroused the greatest enthusiasm. Her Academy picture of 1927 entitled "Morning," which depicts a girl lying on a bed, was acclaimed by the critics as a "superb masterpiece of modern painting," "a noble painting," "the outstanding picture of the year," "a masterpiece fit to hang in any company." Frank Rutter wrote: "She has achieved apparently with consummate ease that complete presentation of twentieth century vision in terms of plastic design after which Derain and other much-praised French painters have been groping for years past. She obtains this monumental plasticity of form without any mannerisms or eccentricities by the sheer



power and beauty of her painting. . . . Here is no artificial composition reeking of the studio, but a fragment of life, nobly seen and simply stated. The girl is a girl of the people, the bedroom is humble and austere in its furnishing . . . the picture is full from corner to corner with life, air and light . . . a creative design of compelling power and beauty . . . a superb achievement the greatness of which will probably be still more patent a hundred years hence than it is to-day. For three years Mrs. Dod Proctor has gone steadily forward. . . . It is thoroughly modern in feeling and execution, and should satisfy the most exacting of progressive critics."

These are our chief women painters; but a criticism passed upon the seventy-third exhibition of the Society of Women Artists indicates the general standard of women's art to-day: "Generally pleasing, with enough of a distinctive character to justify the existence of the Society. . . . What the character is, it would not be easy to say, but it corresponds roughly to the change in atmosphere when you 'join the ladies'. . . the same things are discussed as in masculine society, but they are discussed more inconsequently and with more enjoyment of details than the male mind would consider irrelevant." There are 200 members of the Society, and on the eve of the opening of their annual exhibition they dine together.

To mention a few, picked out haphazard, whose work is typical: Beatrice Bland is a decorative impressionist, interested primarily in light, air and colour; at her best she is a captivating artist. She has had several exhibitions of her flower pieces and landscapes. Anna Airey paints the most exquisite flower pictures, and also forceful landscapes and interiors; Ethel Walker paints flowers and figures; she also sculpts. The work

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of Nan West has attracted favourable notice at the exhibitions at the New English Art Club. She has a happy, girlish spirit which found an outlet in her wall decoration at the Orthopædic Hospital. Anna Zinkeisen specializes in such subject pictures as "Boxing," which she says is "so paintable" in "its stirring brutality." A great many women do modelling, and it is said that men are now in very marked minority both at the Slade and the Royal Academy modelling schools; at the former all the annual prizes for sculpture were recently gained by women students.

Several members of the Royal Family have cultivated Art; Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll, was one of the earliest; she modelled the statue of Queen Victoria that stands in the Broad Walk in Kensington Gardens, directly facing the window of the room in which Victoria was born. Princess Beatrice paints in oils and water-colours, and Princess Patricia, the only one among the younger members who goes in for art seriously, has a studio of her own.

There are many serious artists among Society women: the Duchess of Buckingham and Chandos, Lady Welby, Florence, Countess of Darnley, Lady Chambers, and Violet, Duchess of Rutland, have had public exhibitions of their work. The Duchess of Rutland has done many pencil portraits of celebrities, including Lord Balfour, Lady Lytton, Winston Churchill, Paderewski and Mary Pickford. Among the most interesting studies in her collection are those of her daughter Diana as a baby, child, bride, nurse and actress. Her taste for art as a young girl was encouraged by Burne Jones's advice to her father when he inquired who would be the best teacher for her: "Let her sit in front of the glass and draw and draw."

Lady (Hilton) Young has been elected an Associate

of the Royal Society of British Sculptors. She has done busts of a number of well-known people and has had exhibitions of her work on both sides of the Atlantic. Mrs. Bonham Carter is making a name as a sculptor although it is only five or six years since she began to study art. Her first piece, "Remorse," was accepted by the Academy a couple of years ago and attracted considerable attention.

In the seventies the Hon. Mrs. William Lowther, mother of the former Speaker, and such of her friends as were artistic, used to have a meeting every year to show each other their paintings and fine needlework. Out of this informal gathering the Royal Amateur Art Society grew and it still flourishes. Besides painting and needlework, other artistic handicrafts are shown; wonderful feather-work pictures, hand-painted glass, tiger lilies in mother-of-pearl, petit point pictures, etc. Many well-known Society women contribute.

As for architecture, the competition for a design for the new Shakespeare Theatre at Stratford was won by a woman, Miss Elizabeth Scott, grand-niece of the famous Victorian architect of the same name. The design has both dignity and strength, and will be admirably adapted to its surroundings. She had previously won the Victory Scholarship of the Royal Institute of British Architects in competition with twenty men. It was the first time a woman had won this scholarship.

Music, as far as composition is concerned, is not one of the arts that women practise very successfully in this country. By far the most gifted of our women composers is Dame Ethel Smyth, who has, it is true, been made a Dame of the British Empire, but whose life has nevertheless been spent for the most part in efforts to bring her works before the public. None



MRS. DOD PROCTOR



MRS. LAURA KNIGHT, A.R.A.





deny that Dame Ethel has the soul of a true musician nor that she is both original and forceful, yet the difficulties she has had in getting her works performed in this country have been endless; both France and Germany, admittedly more musical countries than England, acclaimed her worth and performed her compositions long ago. However, when at last in 1893 her *Mass in D* was produced at the Albert Hall, Fuller Maitland declared that "this work has definitely placed the composer among the most eminent composers of her time." Since then a large number of her works, including her five operas, have been performed in England and met with a certain amount of appreciation; she has concerts of her own compositions, and the musical critics acknowledge that she has "a forceful personality both as a composer and a conductor, and everything she attempts is marked with virility." At a recent concert two trios for flute, oboe and pianoforte were pronounced especially pleasing examples of the composer's art, and the second—two interlinked French folk-tunes—vastly charming. One thing which has greatly helped to endear her to the English public is the publication of her delightful reminiscences, that have run into three separate volumes, and are full of humour and shrewd perception. Why Dame Ethel did not obtain earlier the recognition to which her great musical talents undoubtedly entitle her, is not apparent, but the leaders of the musical profession are practically all men and it is not impossible they may have hesitated to admit a rival of another sex. There are some grounds for their hesitation. At a special meeting of members of the musical profession not long ago the chairman said the present was a particularly anxious time for their profession as a whole; they did not know quite where the mechanical side of music was going to

lead them. Sir Henry Wood, however, has been her good friend, and is too broad-minded not to appreciate musical talent wherever he may find it. He was the first conductor in England to introduce women into his orchestra, and says he has never regretted it. He maintains that women bring a spirit into an orchestra which it is impossible to get without them, and that they are quite as good as men when it comes to playing the violin, viola and 'cello. Miss Daisy Kennedy was the first British woman violinist to play at the famous Salzburg Festival.

A significant part of British musical life is the British Women's Orchestra, which the musical critic of *The Times* admits is doing admirable work and "appears to be the most permanent orchestral institution in London." In male orchestras every player is prepared to act as a spare part in any other orchestra, whereas the women's orchestra keeps its personnel together. It gives very few concerts and rehearses them thoroughly. For the time being it is reluctantly obliged to include eight male players because there are some departments of an orchestra for which at present it is difficult or impossible to find competent women players. Another critic said "this orchestra signified two years ago that it intended to be a real addition to London music. The leaders are very competent and the orchestra usually contrives to give pleasure even when as sometimes happens the standard of performance fluctuates."

Lawrence Hope and Madame Liza Lehmann composed charming songs, and both were exceedingly popular in their time. Julia Chatterton is deeply interested in Oriental music and composed the "Queen of Sheba." Jean Sterling Mackinlay is a great favourite with her old songs and ballads. Singers and

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## WOMAN AND THE ARTS

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performers on various instruments whose level of excellence is very high are far too numerous to mention here, and there are some indications that in time women will be able to hold their own with men. Out of four musical competitions recently organized in connection with the third Schoolboys' Own Exhibition three were won by girls.

Women are certainly not lacking in pluck, enterprise nor perseverance. Madame Novello-Davies, at the age of sixty-seven, hopes to fulfil her lifelong ambition of taking to the English-speaking people in various parts of the world the Anglo-Celtic folk songs which she and her choir have already made popular; she has started with them on a world concert tour to last three years.

## XI

### CAREERS FOR WOMEN

LET us consider some of the possible careers now open to women. First, the Civil Service, which forty years ago was closed to them. The Home Office was the first department to recognize that some women had capacities beyond mere routine work, and in 1893 appointed two inspectors of factories; the Board of Education followed suit, appointing some inspectors of schools. The best prospects in the Civil Service are afforded by appointments in the administrative class, to which entrance is by open competitive examination, but only girls with first class honours degrees have any chance of success. The first grade is that of assistant principals at £200 per annum, rising to £400; the next that of principal at £600, rising to £750; and lastly assistant secretary at £850, rising to £1,000.

From the woman's point of view the results of the recent Civil Service examinations is most satisfactory. In open competition for eleven appointments in the highest grade of Civil Service, one of them was won by a Newnham girl and she is now an assistant principal at the Ministry of Transport. Even more significant was the success of the women in the competition for Second Division appointments. There were 600 candidates for 87 posts, and no fewer than 28 of the 87 were carried off by women. One of them gained the second place in the examination and another the fourth,

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The Tax Inspectorate Board of Inland Revenue affords a good career for women with financial and business ability. An income tax inspector has to determine the tax liability of large trading concerns, and must be able to argue points with solicitors and accountants, and conduct cases for the Crown before the Appeal Commissioners. Entrance is by open competitive examination, and the first grade that of assistant inspector at £160 per annum, rising to £400; the second, inspector at £450, rising to £550; and finally senior inspector at £600, rising to £750. The District Audit staff of the Ministry of Health is recruited by the same examination, and juniors appointed at the same salary.

Appointments in factory inspection are subject to two years' probation, and entrance examinations in factory law and sanitary science. Inspectors begin at £200, rising to £350; district inspectors at £350, rising to £450; deputy superintending inspectors at £550. There is a woman superintending inspector with a salary of £550, and a chief inspector at £750.

There are some openings in the Civil Service for medical work and science research: as medical officers in the Board of Education, Ministry of Health, Home Office, Scottish Board of Health and Post Office, at salaries of £250 to £1,400. These posts which are advertised in the Press usually require considerable experience. The research posts for women are not numerous, nor are the careers offered attractive; there is little prospect for a chemist; employment in Government laboratories is almost restricted to temporary chemists at £160 to £220, and unless transferred to the permanent staff they must leave at the age of thirty. A few women are employed in research at the National Physical Laboratory at £250



to £450, two or three at the Ministry of Agriculture, and two in the Victoria and Albert Museum at £230 to £390.

Inspectorships under the Board of Education are attractive; the salaries range from £300 to £1,000. Entrance is by nomination, and experience is essential. Pensions on retirement vary according to the cost of living; at present they are £99 on a salary of £200.

In Commercial Art there are openings nowadays which formerly did not exist. The Royal Society of Arts hold a competition every year for industrial designs in the following classes: (1) architectural decoration, (2) textiles, (3) furniture, (4) book production, (5) pottery and glass, (6) miscellaneous, and scholarships and prizes are awarded amounting to nearly £1,600, at values ranging from £5 to £100. Students whose work has been accepted for exhibition and who wish to obtain employment as designers should apply to the secretary of the Royal Society of Arts.

Music is not to be recommended as a lucrative profession; it is over-crowded, especially as regards teaching, and there is no doubt that the advent of the gramophone and the wireless, which bring music without effort into the homes of the masses, have seriously restricted the number of pupils. In Victorian days it was considered essential that a girl should be able to play on the piano whether she had any taste for music or not; now only really keen students learn; they are pleasant to teach but limited in number.

[The teaching profession, hitherto a hardy evergreen, is beginning to wilt. Certainly the life of a mistress in a school is freer and pleasanter than it was, especially with the increased facilities for getting about; but the Burnham scale, although it ensures good salaries, has this disadvantage that as a teacher's salary must be

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increased every year, many schools, the large private ones in particular, employ young mistresses, and after thirty a woman will find it increasingly difficult to obtain a post, and when she has one that is unsuitable she dare not attempt to change. Every year of unemployment means a postponement of the date of receiving her pension and is a serious matter. There is also rather a tendency to cut down staffs; mistresses are asked to take an extra subject and an older woman's services dispensed with. To give one example: I recently heard of a young English mistress who was asked to take the sewing class. Clever women usually find posts; it is the rank and file who suffer. In regard to the L.C.C. schools Lord Eustace Percy, the Minister of Education, not long ago estimated the number of unplaced young teachers from the training colleges at almost 1,000. In September, 1927, when the Edmonton District Council advertised five vacancies for teachers they had 200 applications. I know a charming and clever girl with a B.A. degree who a year out of college was at length compelled to accept a post as infant teacher in an elementary school. The fact is the decline in the birth-rate is beginning to tell and the number of children in the schools is less. To take one example, in Plumstead within the last four years two L.C.C. schools have been closed. It may be urged that with the building of many new houses in other districts the population of Plumstead is to a certain extent drifting away; but against that we must set the fact that scarcely any houses are up for sale and none are to be let. In a village in Kent, not very far from Plumstead, a school which used to consist of fifty-seven children has fallen to nineteen. At a country school in Suffolk the head mistress was deprived of her assistant because the number had fallen below

that required. It is undoubtedly true that the higher grade working class man is following the example of the middle and upper classes, and his family very rarely reaches five in number; one, two and three are the more usual. Naturally this reacts upon the schools and will continue to react.

On the other hand, the sphere of the business woman is always tending to enlarge, and if a girl is content to begin her career at the bottom in a good firm she will certainly find opportunities for promotion. The head of Selfridge's staff engagement bureau said not long ago: "There is practically no unemployment among efficient girl shorthand typists; in fact there is a shortage of really good ones." The largest number of openings is to be found in general business offices, commencing at £2 to £3 a week. Keen girls who take a course in book-keeping can become invoice and account sales clerks, cashiers, book-keepers and buyers; or if they take a secretarial course and study a foreign language or two they may find posts as foreign correspondents, private secretaries and confidential clerks. That women can rise may be gathered from the fact that Miss Edith Beesley was appointed manager of the West End branch of the Southern Life Association at a salary of £1,000 a year. At the final examination for membership of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries last December, two women were successful; the number of women members of the Institute is now fifty, the majority of whom are in responsible positions in good firms. The entrance examinations are difficult and include such subjects as mercantile law, company secretarial practice, commercial correspondence, book-keeping, accounts, modern languages, economics, banking and exchange and commercial law. When a woman has passed the examination she has





A CROSS-COUNTRY RUN (1929)



ALL OVER THE FIRST HURDLE





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little difficulty in obtaining a good and well-paid post.

Sir Harold Bowden recently said: "I am confident that there is no post in the business world or indeed in public life which the right woman could not fill every bit as ably as a man."

Women at the present moment are holding responsible posts and directorships at salaries of from £350 to £600 in firms of produce agents, manufacturing agents, machinery merchants, wholesale druggists, rubber manufacturers, paper, printing, bookbinding and publishing firms. There are successful women accountants in very responsible posts in financial and Stock Exchange firms, and quite a number of company secretaries.

The majority of the great business women of to-day have climbed into positions of £1,000 a year and even more by means of shorthand and typing. Miss Gordon Holmes, the woman stockbroker, started her career in a city office at £1 a week; Miss E. D. Clarke, the woman estate agent and auctioneer, began as a clerk in a big firm, worked up to the position of manager, and then started business on her own account. Miss Reynolds, head of one of the largest publicity firms in the kingdom, also began life as a clerk. Some of the best-known women journalists in Fleet Street started as ordinary typists, volunteered for odd reporting jobs, and flowered out into journalists. The great thing is to begin in a good office, no matter how humble the salary. Miss Kathleen Britter, the first woman conveyancer, began her career as a typist in a solicitor's office, and wishing to understand what she typed read up Law in her spare time. Another girl in a solicitor's office who had to make notes of conversations and evidence to be offered at trials, read

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## BRITISH WOMEN IN TWENTIETH CENTURY

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Law after office hours and is now a fully fledged solicitor herself. However dull work may be, if it is understood it becomes more interesting.

The number of women employed in banks and insurance companies has decreased since 1919, but there are still some openings in large provincial towns for secondary school girls at a salary of £90, rising to £200 after eleven years, or for shorthand-typists at £110, rising to £220, while the London rates are rather higher. After some years' routine work in an insurance office it is sometimes possible to obtain a position as agent at £3 a week and commission; this might lead to an inspectorship and even a managership. There are occasional openings with insurance brokers and in the great steamship companies, where although to begin with the pay is small, there are a good many opportunities of rising. A shorthand-typist of eighteen might get £1 a week, rising to £3, and if qualified she might rise to supervisor, foreign correspondent, departmental manager or private secretary at a salary of £250, rising to £500 after ten years.

Last year a woman was appointed for the first time to the position of head of the costings and accounts department of the House of Lords at a salary of £600 a year.

At a luncheon given in Liverpool not long ago by the Chamber of Commerce to four hundred delegates, there was one woman present, the first and only woman secretary of the Chamber of Commerce in England. Lord Derby courteously recognized her presence in the opening words of his speech: "Lady and Gentlemen . . ." The London Chamber of Commerce, which up to very recent times consisted only of men, now has 130 women members, each of whom occupies an important position in some commercial house. The

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great business exchanges do not at present admit women traders but are bound to do so before long.

In 1918 the Royal Institute of British Architects first admitted women students.

In 1921 a woman after five years' apprenticeship to the Caledonian Shipbuilding and Sea Engineering Company qualified as a marine engineer and went to sea. Several British women have been granted seafaring certificates in Cape Town, where examinations are held periodically. Any woman with the necessary seafaring experience can present herself there for examination. Miss Victoria Drummond, granddaughter of Lord Amherst, after obtaining a certificate in this way served on board the Blue Funnel liner *Anchises* on the run to Australia via the Cape. She was the junior of ten officers in the engine-room, wore the blue uniform and badge cap of her professional rank and kept her watch regularly. Lady Ernestine Hunt, well-known in yachting circles, was recently granted a master mariner's certificate and can now command any yacht.

Messrs. J. Lyons & Co., Cadby Hall, have a large staff of chemists, all University graduates, four of whom are women. Each chemist takes a special line; an old Cheltenham girl does jams, honies, golden syrups and sugars.

Miss Annette Ashberry was the first woman member of the Society of Engineers. In April, 1923, Miss Griff, A.M.I.C.E., set up a foundry. In the same year the first International Congress of Women Engineers was held at Birmingham, together with the fourth annual meeting of the Women's Engineering Society. The president of the fifth annual conference of Women Engineers is a shining example of what a woman can do. She began her career as a mill hand and is now

a successful builder in partnership with her husband. At present she is occupied with building houses and bungalows near Windsor for the Egham council.

The Electrical Association for Women was started three years ago and now has 2,000 members and six flourishing branches. A club room and new premises were recently opened by the President, Lady Astor, M.P., in Palace Place, Kensington Court, on the site of the first generating station for supplying electricity to London.

Six women have been working for three years as an electric company in Exeter, and in the course of that time have wired up villages and houses in many parts of Devonshire; they have even designed and built power stations.

Six women were successful recently as chartered accountants. There are favourable opportunities in this profession for girls clever at maths. In the old days it was different: Miss Harris Smith applied in vain for admission to the Incorporated Society of Accountants in 1888, and to the Chartered Institute in 1891. It was not till November, 1918, that her claims were recognized and she was made an honorary member of the Incorporated Society of Accountants and Auditors, and in 1920 a Fellow of the Chartered Institute, which had become open to women articled clerks by the passing of the Sex Disqualification Act a few months earlier.

The example of Miss Octavia Hill, the pioneer housing reformer, who devoted her life to an attempt to transform the slums into clean and cheerful dwelling-places is not forgotten. Having seen what she was able to accomplish several provincial towns have appointed as house property managers women who will take a similar interest in the property. The first municipality outside London to adopt women managers



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was the City of Chester; they appointed Miss Upcott, who had had the benefit of working with Miss Hill, giving her a salary to begin with of £250 a year. Five other towns soon followed suit. The training is not long and is given at a moderate cost by the Association of House Property Managers.

Many women's associations place housing among their aims, notably the Women's Housing Councils which have been formed in a number of London boroughs to assist slum clearance, education and child welfare. The two National Housing Associations—the National Housing and Town Planning Council and the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association—both of which were formerly entirely composed of men, are very glad to admit women; the latter has now a woman's section. Only women can thoroughly realize the pitifulness and degradation of living in unhealthy overcrowded houses.

The duties of a health visitor are interesting; there are nearly 4,000 whole and part time health visitors in England and Wales, appointed by local authorities. In London salaries are £150 to £250, with a Civil Service bonus in addition; in the provinces £166 to £190 a year.

The report of the Inter-Departmental Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries last March stated that "the woman's part in agriculture is of unique importance . . . and it is desirable that the education of women should form part of the general scheme of agricultural education." The Ministry offer about 120 scholarships for short courses (not exceeding one year) at farm institutes, and ten scholarships for diploma or degree courses in an agricultural or allied subject at agricultural colleges and universities, or for veterinary courses at veterinary colleges. Awards are confined to



the sons and daughters of rural workers, and are of sufficient value to enable the recipients to attend the various courses without cost to their parents.

There are one or two new posts in the Rural Community Council movement for which University graduates will be preferred; they must have a knowledge of rural life and organizations.

As for gardening for women, the secretary of the Women's Farm and Garden Association stated not long ago that at the present time the demand for well-trained, well-educated women gardeners is very great, and that on their books they had far more posts than they are able to fill; people often preferring women gardeners because they have been able to obtain a better training than the men. She said that two or three years' training in a good horticultural college is essential, and costs about £100 a year, which includes board and lodging. A head gardener gets about £3 a week, or living in from 27s. to £2. Under gardeners from 25s. to 35s. a week, or living in 15s. to 20s. There are seven large horticultural training colleges now open to women. When Miss K. Barratt, the Principal of Swanley Horticultural College, made her annual report, she stated that during the last four years sixty-one students had obtained salaried posts as lecturers, teachers, research workers, gardeners, farm-hands and poultry keepers; nineteen were working home gardens and eleven had gone out to the Colonies. Of the students who had left before 1922, four were principals of colleges, one was vice-principal at Ambler, the biggest school of its kind in the United States of America, and one was the head of the Botany Department at Rothamsted Experimental Station.

It was stated at a recent conference at Swanley that there are over 20,000 women farmers in England and

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Wales, and that agriculture was the third industry in the country in regard to the number of women employed.

The first veterinary institution to admit women was the Glasgow Veterinary College, and it recently had two girls in the prize list. For the first time a woman took the honours ticket and also won in the face of male competition the silver medal of the Highland Stable Management Society.

Women students were admitted for the first time in October, 1927, to the Royal Veterinary College, Camden Town, which was founded in 1791. Complete Courses of instruction are given for the Diploma of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. Major Hobday, the Principal of the Royal Veterinary College, said at a congress of the National Veterinary Medical Association at Torquay that they welcomed the admission of women students. While natural chivalry made them rather shudder when they thought of women doing the dirty work which accompanies medical or surgical attendance on sick cows or horses, there is an enormous field of untrodden ground in connection with the smaller animals, among dogs and cats, rabbits and even birds, which have a sentimental value not to be calculated in terms of money. There is a great work still to be done, and the aid of women is going to make a great difference. Seven have qualified already and taken high degrees. Miss Roberts of Liverpool has been awarded the Williams' memorial prize at the Royal Veterinary College as the best student in the final examination.

During the War when food was short the Ministry of Agriculture encouraged the breeding of tame rabbits. It was soon realized that the skins also had their value, and were actually worth more than the meat. Breeding proved so profitable that an industry grew very quickly

out of it. Already there are 2,000 members of the Fur Board Limited, an organization which exists to assist rabbit breeders, and whose chief task is to regulate prices and dispose of pelts. Much is being done to breed beautiful skins that need no dyeing to improve them. Last year the Fur Board, after deducting its expenses, was able to distribute about £8,000 among its members for pelts produced. Most of the rabbit breeding farms are situated on Hayling Island, where it is computed about 10,000 pelts are grown yearly. The Angora rabbit is sheared just like a sheep, and having yielded up its fleece, proceeds to grow another. The wool of the Angora is largely bought by a spinning firm who began a few years ago with a purchase of £40, which by 1926 was increased to £20,000. It is mixed with silk and forms a material of superfine texture. It is a good plan to take a course of instruction for three or four months on a good rabbit farm. Qualified assistants receive £2 weekly, rising to £200 a year or more; or a woman can start her own farm, beginning with say a dozen rabbits from a reliable source. There is a promising future for rabbit fur. Lady Watson, the wife of the Member for the Pudsey and Otley Division, is a noted Yorkshire breeder. Lady Rachel Byng runs an Angora rabbit farm at Kingsmead, Windsor, where she has about a thousand rabbits.

Silver fox breeding is another important industry, highly specialized. The breeders have a journal of their own and an association to protect their interests. In last year's fur sales nearly 22,000 silver foxes were offered; the skin of a silver fox may bring anything from £10 to £220.

The theatrical profession has changed considerably during the last fifty years. From the social point of view it is on a much higher level, but there are scarcely

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the opportunities for grounding in dramatic work that were afforded by the old touring companies. It is true that a girl with a charming personality and a little gift for dancing and singing can sometimes rise with a bound from the chorus in musical comedy to the position of star, without any very great output of energy, but for the keen student of the serious drama there are not the openings there used to be for making a livelihood. The best opportunities are to be found in the numerous Stage Societies and Repertoire Companies that have sprung up and are doing first-rate work.

I am afraid there is not much in films at the moment for the woman anxious to get on; not long ago a film artist booking agent said: "The business is already immensely overcrowded, and I have from 2,000 to 3,000 professional people on my books." The licensing of a cinema college and studios was opposed about the same time at a meeting of the L.C.C. Public Control Committee on the ground that "it held out prospects of employment which it could not fulfil." The college managed to secure its license, although the managing director of another agency admitted he had always a large number of professional artists on his books who were unemployed. It is difficult for a woman to obtain an engagement in British films. All over the world the film industry is mostly in the hands of men, but women are beginning to take part in scenario work, film cutting, publicity, costume design and continuity writing. There is certainly one woman in England who has made a success on the films; she has acted in films, done film directing, "cut" films, edited films, written scenario, and acted as floor secretary in several film studios; she has also married a well-known English film director, Alfred Hitchcock, but she is best known as Miss Alma Reville. Her



opinion is that it is worth while for really keen girls to enter the film business because British films are certainly going ahead, and as their popularity increases, there will be more openings for clever girls. They must be willing to start in the "cutting room" where the film is assembled, and they may rise to the "floor," and if quick and clever may eventually obtain a responsible job. There is another woman, Miss Dicker, who has helped in the technical production of films for nearly sixteen years. She began by playing small parts at the age of fourteen. Then she went into the "dark room" and did "perforating" and "negative cutting," and from that rose to be continuity writer, i.e., to supervise the passage of the film from the time it is "shot" in the studio till it is received for final treatment in the editorial department. She has to select the best "shots" as the film comes from the camera, link them up together and prepare the negative for the first showing; after which she has to prepare all the additional copies that are required. If a girl is keen on the work she should take any job that admits her into a studio, at any salary, and once there if she has talent she will make good, but she ought to specialize.

In the picturesque window of an old house originally built for the Maids of Honour from Kensington Palace, the Misses Banks, the first two women to run a second-hand bookshop, display their wares. They do everything themselves, buying, pricing, cleaning, cataloguing, serving customers, delivering parcels. One of the most difficult parts of the work, they say, is the purchasing of libraries, as it is impossible to examine every book and much of the contents has to be taken on chance. They sell a tremendous number of books from a penny to a shilling in a box outside. The old established book-



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sellers are all very kind and courteous and have admitted the elder sister as the first woman member of the International Society of Antiquarian Booksellers.

The advent of the bobbed and shingled head has not been without its blessings; it has opened up a whole new field for women's enterprise. To keep a shingled head in proper order it is necessary for a practised hand to attend to it once a fortnight or even once a week; and then there are the permanent waving and countless other adjuncts to be dealt with. As a result hairdressing is now one of the most flourishing of professions, and up and down the country hairdressing establishments are being opened, run and worked exclusively by women; a woman can shingle as well as a man, and as a rule takes more interest in her customers, studying the shape of the head and the style most becoming to each client.

In the drapery trade there are openings for innumerable assistants and it now affords a fairly pleasant way of earning a livelihood. All the big stores have realized that to obtain efficiency the staff must be healthy and happy, and besides all the improvements that have been effected by the various Acts and the welfare workers, sports-grounds and club rooms have been provided, and dances, sports and games of every kind organized. The average shop assistant begins work on leaving school.

At the end of the last century the life of the woman shop assistant was very hard and badly paid; they received considerably lower wages than men; their average wage was from £10 to £26 with board and lodging, which was thirty-three per cent. lower than the men's. These meagre wages were subject to serious deductions; a fine-book of a large London house contained nearly a hundred rules with fines varying

from 6d. to 5s. : for standing on a chair, 6d. ; permitting customers to go unserved without calling the special attention of the buyer or shop-walker, 1s. ; wrong or insufficient address on a parcel, 2s. 6d. In 1894 the long hours were a most trying feature ; girls complained : " Counter and bed is the common lot of most of us." The Shop Hours Regulation Act of 1886 limited hours of children employed in shops to 74, but no inspection was provided ; the Act of 1892 extended the limit to " young persons," inspection being optional ; shop hours varied ; one assistant stated that in Chelsea, Fulham and Hammersmith she worked from 88 to 90 hours, but when in Holloway 63½ hours. Average hours in South and East London 50 to 74. The hours were shortest in the central districts of large towns ; towards the suburbs, particularly in working-class districts, the hours were longer ; on Saturday till midnight. It was a common thing for a shop to be opened at eight in the morning and kept open till nine at night. A good saleswoman in a wholesale house might earn £1 a week. There was seldom any provision for social life and no time to enjoy it ; twenty minutes or half an hour was all that was allowed for dinner, and a girl was liable to be called off if required in the shop. There were no annual holidays ; the girls were supposed to have one free day a month but often did not get it. Strenuous efforts were made to secure combination among shop assistants but it was extremely difficult. The Early Closing Association had, however, been started, and was already hard at work. In those days most shop assistants would " marry anybody to get out of the drapery business."

As a rule, every year those girls in the elementary schools who now wish to enter the drapery, millinery and dressmaking trades are drafted in batches into the

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big stores and other first-rate establishments; or they go in for trade scholarships, and if successful have a year or two's training at a polytechnic and are able to obtain better positions. Very often a newcomer who is making a success of her work in a shop is able to recommend her school friend. The usual wage to begin with is 10s. or 12s. a week, but if a girl takes every opportunity of learning the possibilities and good points of the wares she is handling, and shows that she possesses tact, patience and good manners, she will soon attract favourable attention from those in authority and obtain promotion. If she has good judgment, a quick grasp of bargain possibilities and a flair for what is going to be worn, she may rise to the position of buyer, have a big staff under her and the spending of many thousands of pounds every year. When a good position is attained the salaries are very large; some women make as much as £2,000 a year. In the dress-making department a girl may get a position as a trotter, taking messages between work-room and show-room, or as a matcher to buy ribbons, cottons, etc., to match material; if she is smart at her work she will get into the show-room and be able to work her way up. Girls who have not been drafted in from school or polytechnic, and are willing to pay a premium of about £20, are often taken on by the large stores as apprentices, and if at the end of four months they are found unsuitable the premium is returned to them; sometimes they are accepted as learners without a premium. In the dressmaking and millinery establishments there is often the drawback that at slack times a girl has to "stand off," while at others, when there is a rush, she may have to stay overtime. It is best to get into a firm that has a wholesale as well as a retail business as they have work to be done all the year round, and

the hours as a rule are regular. Miss Gladys Burlton, Principal of the Burlton Business Institute, said at a conference on New Careers for Women: "The chief qualifications for salesmanship are tact, sympathy, good health, good brains, good temper and love of humanity. . . . The chilling atmosphere which sometimes becomes apparent on the part of a saleswoman when it is clear that no sale will be made is not only bad manners but disastrous from a business point of view. . . . A saleswoman is like a doctor. She must diagnose her customer at a glance and develop the soothing 'bed-side' manner which inspires confidence."

These are only a few of the innumerable openings for women. In some cases one woman only has led the way: Mrs. H. Vernet is England's only woman bookmaker; Miss Irvine the only professional tea-taster appointed by H.M. Government; Miss Dorothy Hutton the first woman pioneer as a scribe and heraldic illuminator; Miss Gertrude Martin is manufacturing mosaics; Mrs. Webb Smith is working as a wholesale florist and commission agent in Covent Garden; Miss Lorimer is buyer in the Oriental department of one of the big stores, a position for which she has unusual qualifications. She made a special study of archæology at Oxford, and after leaving Somerville became assistant to Sir Aurel Stein of the Indian Archæological Survey, with whom she worked for nine years, cataloguing the collections made by him on expeditions through Central Asia, part of which was housed temporarily in Kashmir, and there she learned about Indian rugs and arts and crafts. When she came home she was asked to start the Oriental department and travelled out to India again to buy the first stock; she went up to the frontier to buy from the caravans, and had always to take with her several hundreds of pounds as the traders do not under-



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## CAREERS FOR WOMEN

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stand cheques. Her love for and understanding of things Indian is largely due to the fact that for five generations her mother's people have been in the Indian Services; her great-grandfather was killed in the Indian Mutiny.

Then there is Miss Gwen Nally, who is a pageant producer and has already produced six pageants this year; Miss Maud West is a detective; Miss Alice M. Head is one of the best-known women in Fleet Street; she is managing director of a magazine company and a keen buyer of antiques.

Last but certainly not least is domestic service, in which the demand is always greater than the supply. The Duchess of Atholl expressed the opinion that girls who enter domestic service are in many respects far better off than the girls who go out as typists or into factories. "There are many careers open to women," the Duchess said, "but in all except one they have to compete with men. The occupation of home-making, however, belongs exclusively to women; it is one in which men cannot compete. The stigma which was once cast on domestic service and nursing is now removed. Nursing has already become an honourable profession, and the science and career of domestic service is fast becoming recognized as one, for many girls of good birth and breeding are taking it up as a really scientific pursuit these days, and in my opinion there can be no more pronounced profession than this for a woman to take up."

One of the latest elected Labour councillors at Bootle is a domestic servant employed as a daily maid. When asked if her new responsibilities would interfere with her domestic work she said: "No, I like domestic service, and besides, I have my living to earn."





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